



# MASIFORM D

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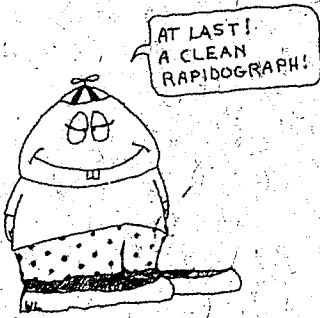
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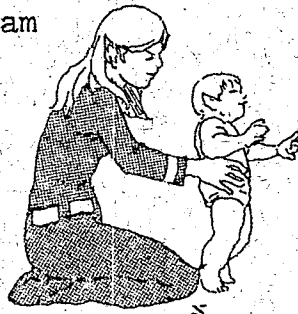


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 In Absentia...Deborah Michael Langsam



# STOKALINE

IT'LL PUT A LITTLE GREEN IN YOUR CHEEKS!"

This is the first time I've ever edited or published a fanzine on my own, so I feel I'm justifiably nervous. In the seven years I've been in fandom, I've always had a co-editor. Now - -

Debbie has moved down to Duke University. She'll be doing post-graduate work down there for four-five years, taking her doctorate in marine mycology. This past summer, she spent a week in Iceland, collecting fungal specimens. Then she left the petri dishes on top of the refrigerator when she went back to school, after a whirlwind visit home. Ah, these scientists. Of course, she lost her shoes that way the year before, which may or may not have a moral to it. . . .

Over the year since my lastish, a great many things have happened. I've finally finished reprinting SPOCKANALIA #4, and completed the majority of the work on #2. The zines are being printed by offset, and will cost \$2 per single issue, or \$10 for the entire set of 5. The small size of the zine (it's reduced by half) feels very strange, but it is quite readable. What joy to know that I will never again have to reprint from a five-year-old stencil!

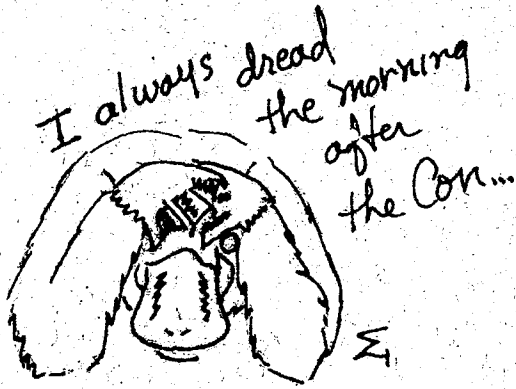
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What do you call it when a woman has three babies at the same time? Tribblets. Mike Miller

---

The ST Convention committee parted from Al Schuster, and I am Chairperson for 1975. We had a rather nasty fight with Al about this. But this year's con seems to be shaping up very nicely, despite that. Membership is around 2,000, and Mr. William Shatner (The Man) (alias Baronet) (alias Harry Leroy) (aka James T. Kirk, Captain) will attend the con, unless he is hired to do a tv series or movie. Final word will come in January, but if no one snaps him up for a series or tv movie,





then he's ours, all ours  
heheheheheh. . . . This  
con game affects your mind  
after a while.

Speaking of brain rot,  
and mind mold, there is a  
new perversion going around,  
from the loveable people  
who brought you Collating  
On The Floor and Folding  
And Gathering ---

#### THE KLINGON NAME JOKE

Kartography is a Klingon mapmaker  
Kaviar is a gourmet  
Kronkite is a Klingon newsreporter  
Karrot is a Klingon farmer  
Klass is a Klingon aristocrat  
Revolting is a Romulan revolutionary

Just the sort of thing to occupy your mind and keep you  
out of the swamps at night.

I'm obviously demented anyway, since I'm now a member of  
the NY in '77 Worldcon bid committee. (Stark staring bonkers,  
as the psychiatrists put it.) Still, it would be nice to have  
two years to prepare for a con, instead of the 8 or 9 months  
we usually have with STcon. It couldn't be any weirder, cer-  
tainly.

This summer, I won first prize at a medieval fair for my  
seed-cake-with-rosewater (also called nuns' cake.) Too bad I  
was the only entry. Sigh.

---

Kassandra was a Klingon prophetess

---

Next May I'm planning to take my first overseas trip - to  
England. My sister Mimi (she-of-the-eveil-mind-who-makes-  
puzzles) and I hope to spend 16 days over there, flittering  
through the Pavilion at Brighton, maundering around The Brit-  
ish Museum, faunching over The Queen's Dollhouse, et cetera.  
I shall probably go bananas when faced with Georgette Heyer  
country, English history-in-bulk, and all those bookstores.

Might even find an eating knife. (Have you ever tried to explain to the man in the cutlery store about needing a belt knife for The Feast of Folly? It's a new low.)

---

Kraith is a failed Klingon theologian

---

Which reminds me of Vonda McIntyre, a lady I roomed with at a Worldcon once. She went into a fabric shop to buy a piece of black cloth. She needed it for part of a costume based on Heinlein's MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS. The salesman gave her a bit of a hard time, trying to find out what kind of black cloth, what do you intend to use this for, ma'm. . . Finally, she said, "We need it to make a Free Luna flag." To which the salesman replied, "The Galactic Federation does not recognise Free Luna." Find fans in the oddest places, you do.)

---

Then there's Kadaver, who works for the Coroner's office...

---

In the course of dithering around trying to think about what sort of things to say in this editorial, it occurred to me that Our Founding Fathers published fanzines; they wrote these dinky little pamphlets, see, and had about 300 run up by their local mimeo man - articles full of inflammatory statements. Who can ever forget "On the necessity of taking up cons," a fanzine by Thomas Jefferson.

---

Krudzine is a fan editor

---

I don't usually print letters of comment, like fanzines that appear more frequently...because it seems to me that it's hard enough to remember the editor's name with eleven months between issues, let alone remember what was the burning issue in the last zine. However, the three letters which follow seemed to have an intrinsic merit and interest unrelated to your memory of what they're commenting on.

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T'Pau is a Batman credit

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## LEE BURWASSER

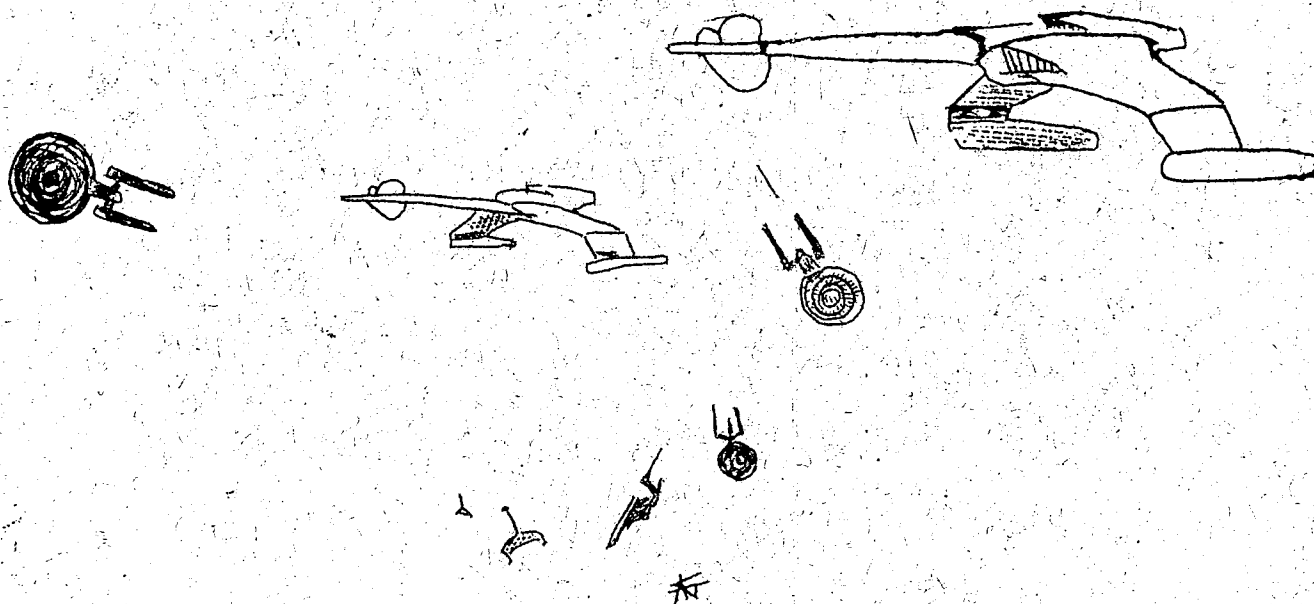
Faster than warp ten. More powerful than a starship.  
Able to level tall mountains with a single blast.

Look! There on the screen! It's a vulture! It's a  
plague-ship! IT'S THE KLINGONS!

Yes, the Klingons! All-too-familiar visitors from  
another planet who came into space with powers and abil-  
ities (not to mention morals) no different from those of  
mortal men. The Klingons! who can change the course of a  
planet's history; bend politics with their bare phasers;  
and who, disguised as human beings - ill-mannered exploit-  
ers of anything exploitable - fight a never-ending battle  
for Power! Empire! and the Klingon way.

As a matter of fact, if the Klingons are like the  
Mongol empire, it's not surprising that the small mer-  
chant adventurers prefer them to the Federation. Their  
counterparts in medieval Europe felt the same way about  
the Jenghizids.

In a world being continually saved for (democracy,  
communism, Christianity, civilization, all of the above,  
none of the above) it's refreshing to contemplate men  
who went out and conquered the world because they damned  
well felt like it.



# WENDY LINDBOE

Here is a supplementary list of things not to put into a ST story, including those items voted most likely to be deemed unfit for television (censorable) -

- 1) Don't have flashbacks into the future. It's confusing and proves that the author
  - a) is overly obsessed with the Lorentz Transforms
  - b) knows absolutely nothing about the Lorentz Transforms, or
  - c) both of the above.The Lorentz Transforms, by the way, are Special Relativity.
- 2) If you are talking about tribbles, make sure you don't violate any copyright laws.
- 3) If you Destroy the Enterprise Utterly and Totally, Taking Every Crewman With It, don't write the story in the first person as told by a crewman who died. Again confusion.
- 4) You may indeed write a story about a herd of horses that is suddenly beamed aboard the Enterprise. If you are R. A. Lafferty.
- 5) You may indeed write a story in which three pages are spent in the turbo-lift. If you are Ted Sturgeon.

(The preceeding two statements were statements of editorial comment. They even reflect the views of the management of the Albany State SF Society, 'cause I am the management of the ASSFS, make no mistake about it.)

Now for the censorable material.

- 1) You may make a character drink as much Antarean Glow Water as you like, provided he doesn't glow afterward.
- 2) If a couple of crewmen who are making it are suddenly beamed back to the ship, they must materialize at least three feet from each other, in an upright position, and fully clothed. The explanation of this phenomenon comes under the heading of "Don't Explain Technicalities." Also, the crewmembers should have their reports ready for the captain, so he doesn't suspect. (This last condition is deletable if one of the crewmen in question is the captain.)

-----  
Konan the barbarian  
-----



/Wendy, by the way, is responsible for most of those truly terrible Klingon jokes. She sent me an entire page filled with them - quite overset my digestion. This one is mine, though.7

-----

Kremora is a milksop

-----

## CAROLYN HILLARD

Thank you somewhat for sending me the "comments." As for my 'censor in the subconscious,' /referring to her use of "darn" rather than "damn" in WARNING, MD 3/ Lee Burwasser should take into account my tender age when that was written. About 17, as I remember. Now, as a fully developed female of twenty, I have expanded my subconscious -- set it free to roam at will, etc. My philosophy now is, if the IDIC fits, wear it. When the Vulcan talks, grin and bear it. Pon farr is a many spendored thing. A human emotes from sun to sun, but a Vulcan's logic can be undone. Any questions class?

Actually, though, I am writing to apply for the position of Captain's yeoman. Among my numerous qualifying factors is an IQ of 125 (on a bad day) 97% efficiency (on a good day) the ability to remain emotionally detached and an utterly charming, witty, though somewhat blunt personality. If the dear captain requires more information than that (the dirty lech!) just flash the figures 34-24-34 and say I've got great legs. If the position has already been filled -- probably by one of those dippy blondes he seems to be so fond of -- just paste a copy of my qualifications up by each turbo-lift. There's more than one officer aboard the Enterprise and I'm really not that particular. I'd even consider Vulcans. (I'm an equal opportunity employee....)

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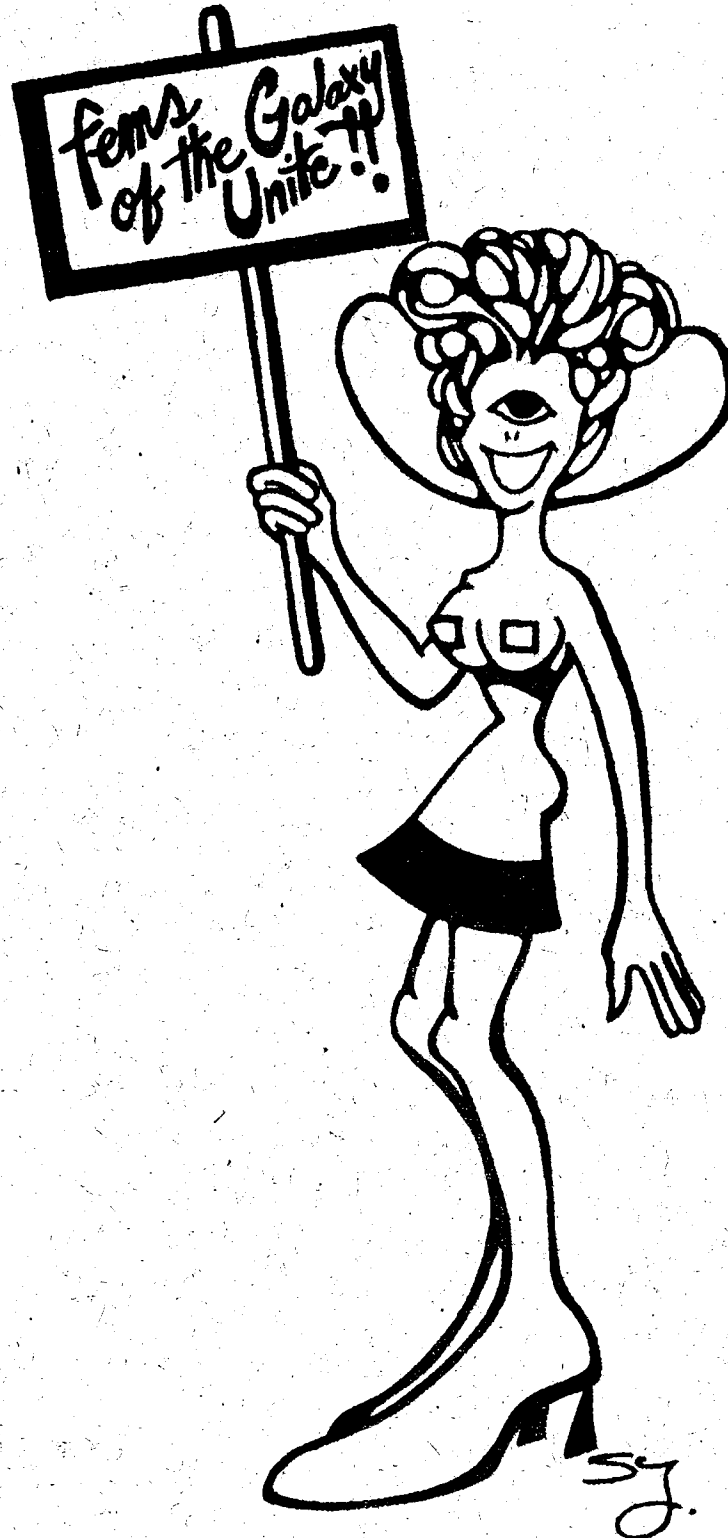
Samik loves brownies

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And now, an ad. I must admit that I've never seen a copy of Jim Meadows' zine, but he asked me if he could reprint sections of our panel on fan writing, so he is obviously a person of exquisite taste and discrimination.

STAR TREK TODAY #6 is finally out of hibernation. Two arduous years in the making, STT6 is minus a co-editor and will contain fiction, reviews, news, whathaveyou, a silly contest and a calling card auction. Can you resist? We hope not. Send in 30¢ for a copy, or if you're foolhardy, \$2 for a 7 issue sub; STT (Jim Meadows III) 31 Apple Court, Park Forest IL 60466.

This may sound like new harping on an old lute, but my cupboard is bare, likewise my story file is empty. Lee Burwasser just sent me an article, but we ~~didn't~~ worked for two years before coming to agreement on the tricky points of her last story. Therefore, dear friends, I do beseech you, contribute! I'll read anything once.



The Twelve Days of Christmas  
at  
Starfleet Lost and Found  
(Lament by the Duty Officer)

by Mary H Schaub

On the first day of Christmas, the Fleet turned in to me  
A fat tribble in a fir tree.

On the second day of Christmas, the Fleet turned in to me  
Two giant eel-birds  
And a fat tribble in a fir tree.

On the third day of Christmas, the Fleet turned in to me  
Three Spican flame gems,  
Two giant eel-birds,  
And a fat tribble in a fir tree.

On the fourth day of Christmas, the Fleet turned in to me  
Four Borgia plants,  
Three Spican flame gems,  
Two giant eel-birds,  
And a fat tribble in a fir tree.

On the fifth day of Christmas, the Fleet turned in to me  
Five wheezy Gorns!  
Four Borgia plants,  
Three flame gems,  
Two eel-birds,  
And a fat tribble in a fir tree.

On the sixth day of Christmas, the Fleet turned in to me  
Six Klingons scheming. . . .

On the seventh day of Christmas, the Fleet turned in to me  
Seven Kelvans knitting. . . .

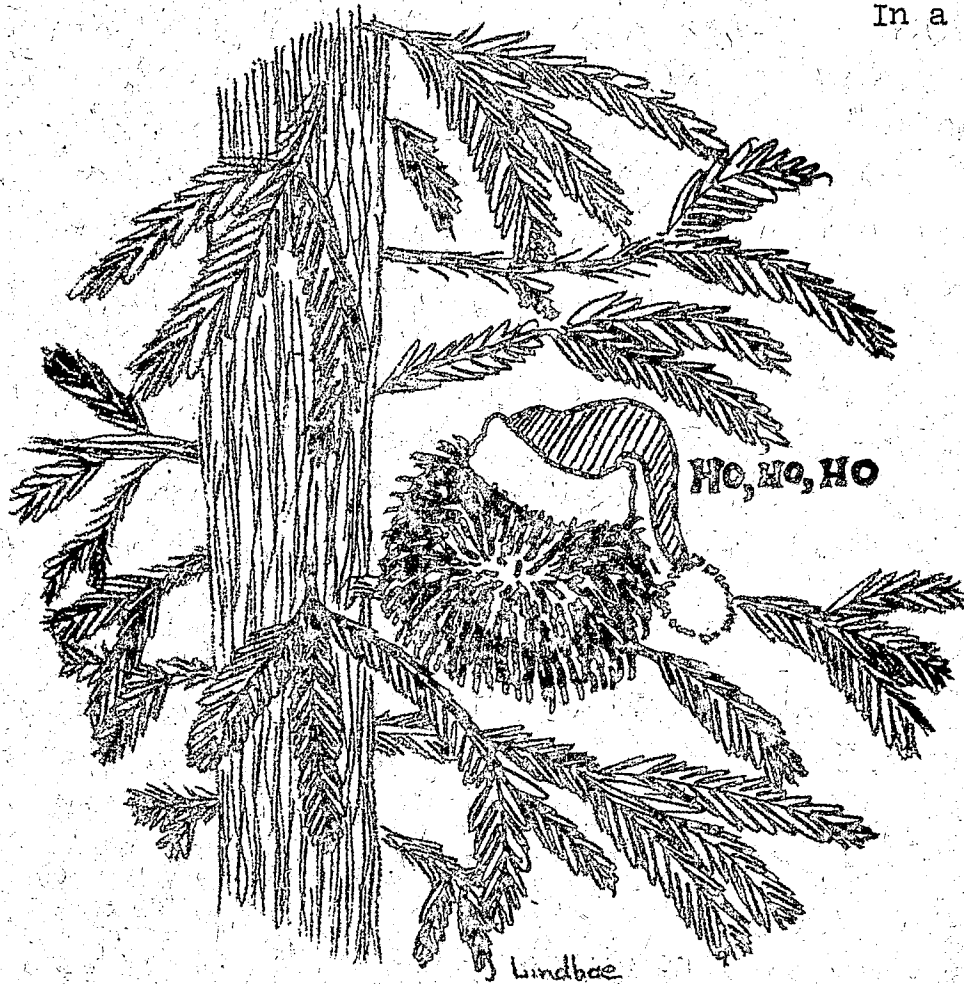
On the eighth day of Christmas, the Fleet turned in to me  
Eight NOMADS beeping. . . .

On the ninth day of Christmas, the Fleet turned in to me  
Nine Vulcans thinking. . . .

On the tenth day of Christmas, the Fleet turned in to me  
Ten Hortas digging. . . .

On the eleventh day of Christmas, the Fleet turned in to me  
Eleven sehlats teething. . . .

On the twelfth day of Christmas, the Fleet turned in to me  
 Twelve bowls of plomik,  
     Eleven sehlats teething,  
     Ten hortas digging,  
     Nine Vulcans thinking,  
     Eight NOMADS beeping,  
     Seven Kelvans knitting,  
     Six Klingons scheming,  
     Five wheezy Gorns!  
     Four Borgia plants,  
     Three flame gems,  
     Two eel-birds,  
     And a fat tribble  
     In a fir tree.



CONCLUSION OF MEMO: I resign!



# ADREGO'S COFFIN

by Eleanor Arnason

A merchant named Adrego went into a foreign country and settled there and went into business. His business prospered, and he married a local woman. Her name was Oda. She was better looking than most and clever as well. In time, Adrego grew homesick, and he began to make plans to return to his home, but first one thing came up and then another, and he put off his return from one year to the next. Then he came down with a fever, and it was soon evident to everyone that he wasn't going to survive. Adrego called his wife to his bed and said, "You know I've been planning to go home." Oda nodded, and Adrego said, "Now, I'm dying, so I won't be able to make that trip on my own, but I want you to take my corpse back to my own country and see to it that I'm buried where my kinfolk are."

Oda said, "It seems to me dirt is dirt no matter where it is; and the dead seldom complain about their accommodations; but if you want me to do this, I'll do it."

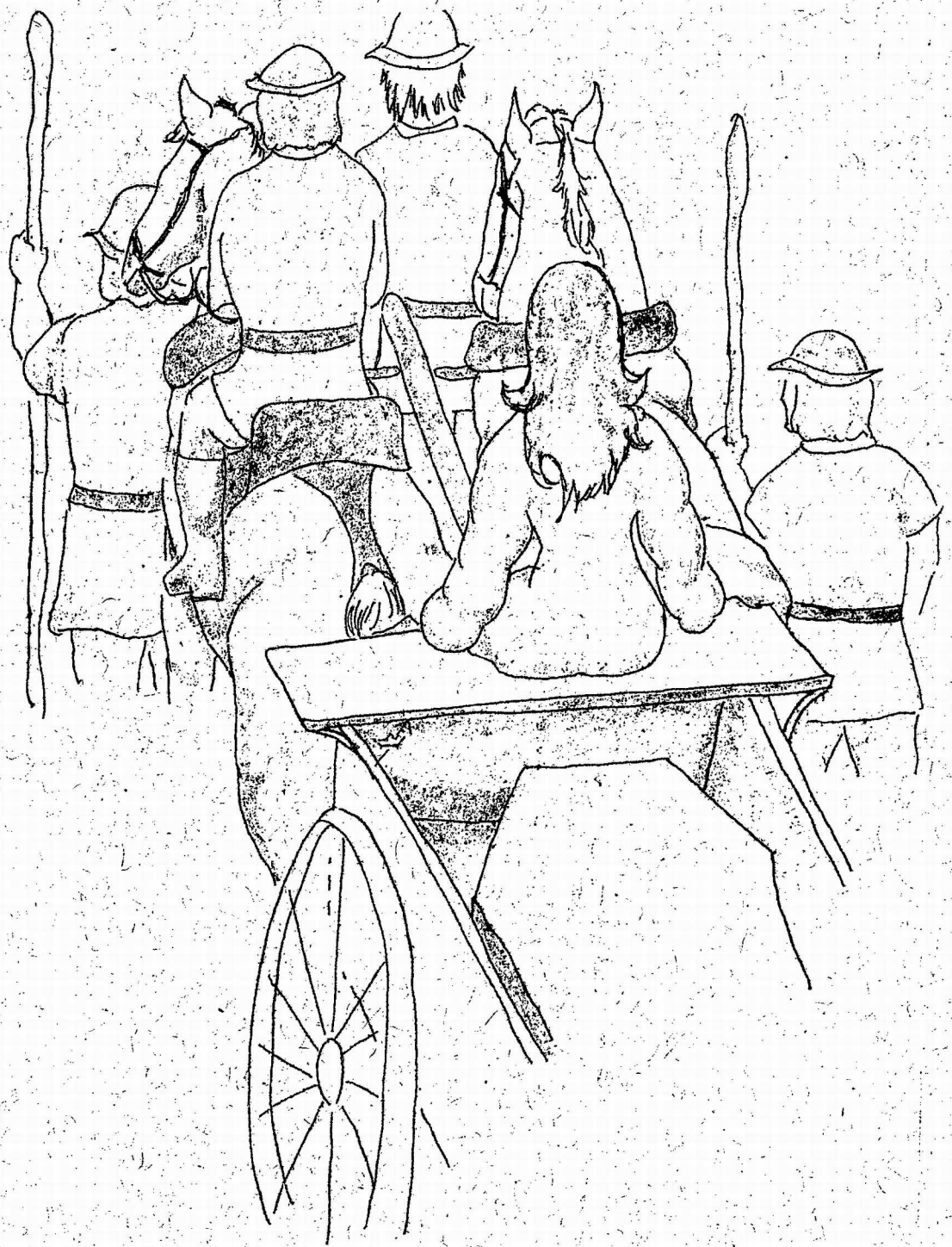
Soon after that, Adrego died; and Oda had him embalmed and coffined; and then she hired a wagon and four wagoners, and she set out for Adrego's home.

After they'd traveled for several days, they entered the great forest that lay between Oda's country and the country of Adrego. Then Oda noticed that the wagoners began to whisper among themselves and to watch her. That night she pretended to go to sleep, but lay awake and listened to the wagoners talk. One of them said, "It seems to me we aren't being paid enough considering the long trip we're making."

Another wagoner said, "That's true, but what can we do about it?"

The first wagoner said, "We're in the wilderness with no one around. No one will stop us if we take the woman's money."

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A third wagoner said, "We can take the woman, too. She's better looking than most."

The wagoners agreed that this was a good idea. Then one of them said, "Let's wait till tomorrow to do this. I've had a rough day, and I don't feel up to robbery and rape."

The wagoners agreed to wait till the next day, and then they lay down to sleep. Oda waited till they were all snoring. Then she got up and got her money, and crept out of the camp into the forest. The night was moonless, and the forest was so dark that Oda couldn't see where she was going. She kept tripping over roots and bumping into tree trunks. After a while, she began to be afraid she'd get so lost wandering around in the dark that she'd never find her way out of the forest. So she stopped and sat down to rest, and stayed where she was till morning.

When morning came, the wagoners awoke and discovered that Oda was gone, and her money with her. They became furious and cursed the wagoner who'd suggested they wait till morning to rob and rape Oda. "For now," one of them said, "We have nothing, not even the money Oda promised us."

Another one said, "And how can we go home now? Oda's relatives will ask us where she is and why we didn't bring her back with us."

Then another wagoner said, "Let's keep going till we get to the other side of the forest. There's a town there where we can sell our wagon and our horses. Then we can go home and say we were attacked by robbers, who took our wagon and Oda, too."

The wagoners agreed that this was a good idea, and they hitched their horses to the wagon. Then one of them said, "We won't be able to sell that coffin with somebody in it, and I don't intend to open it and take Adrego out. He's been in there too long. So let's leave the coffin here."

The other wagoners agreed to this, and they pulled the coffin out of the wagon onto the road. Then they went on.

As for Oda, she spent all morning wandering in the forest and finally at noon she found her way to the road, and found Adrego's coffin. She sat down beside it and said, "Well, husband, it's proving harder than I thought to do what you asked." Then she sat and waited for someone to come along.

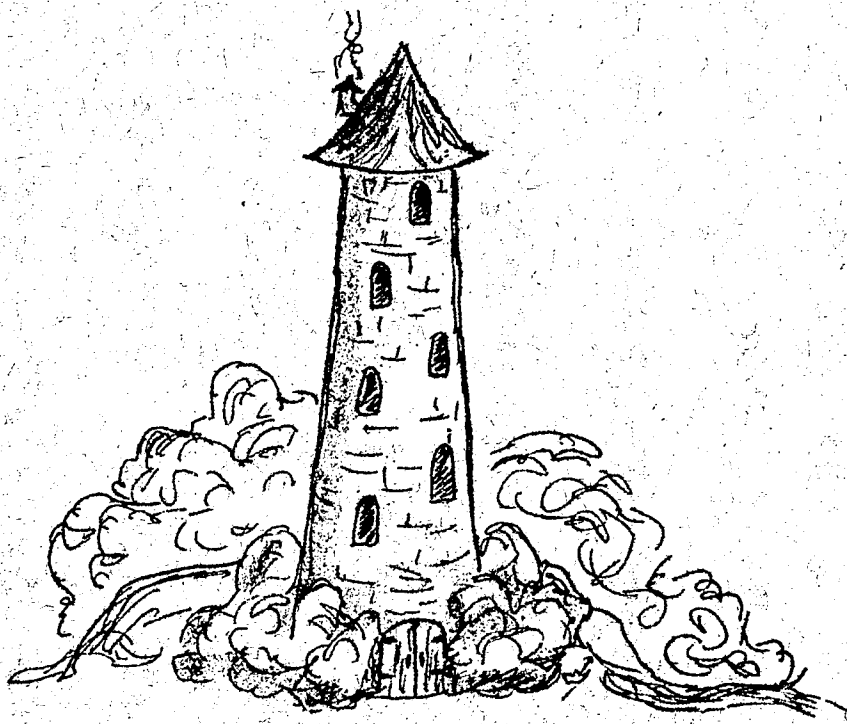
Midway through the afternoon a man came walking down the road. When Oda saw him, she could scarcely believe her

eyes. He was eight feet tall and thick set. His skin was grey-green and he had leaf-green hair. All he had on was a sleeveless green tunic that came down to his knees. He stopped when he saw her, and she said, "I've never seen anybody who looked the way you do."

The green man said, "It's unlikely you would have. There's a powerful wizard living in this forest, and he made me out of a tree so he'd have somebody to talk to and to help around the house." After that, the green man said, "It looks to me as if you're in some kind of trouble. If you tell me about it, maybe I'll be able to help you."

Oda explained her situation, and the green man said, "My master the wizard ought to be able to get you and your husband to where you want to go." Then he picked up the coffin and put it on his shoulder and started off through the forest. Oda followed him. They traveled some time, then came to the wizard's house. It was a stone tower that stood on top of a hill in the middle of the forest. The green man and Oda climbed the hill and went into the tower. They entered a circular room full of strange devices made of metal that moved of their own accord. "What do all these do?" Oda asked.

The green man said, "I don't know. My master the wizard





won't tell me."

At the center of the room there was a circular stair that went up to the second floor. Oda heard somebody coming down it, sneezing all the while. The green man said, "That's my master the wizard. He has hayfever."

Oda said, "It seems to me a wizard ought to be able to cure hayfever."

By this time the wizard was in sight. He was middle aged, balding, and pot bellied, and he was wiping his nose with a big handkerchief that had the signs of the zodiac on it. He said, "Every kind of magic has its limits, young lady, and often what wizards want most - in my case relief from hayfever - they can't get." He put his handkerchief away, then got out a pair of spectacles, put them on and looked at Oda. "You're better looking than most," he said. Then the wizard said to the green man, "Why'd you bring her here, and what's that on your shoulder?"

The green man said, "She's in trouble, master, and I thought you'd be able to help her; and this thing on my shoulder is a coffin."

The wizard said to Oda, "What's your problem?" and Oda explained her situation. When she was done, the wizard said, "I'll help you get your husband to his home town on one condition, that you stay here and share my bed."

Oda said, "I had enough of that sort of thing when Adrego was alive, and now I want some time off. So I'll find some other way to get Adrego to his home." And she turned to go, saying, "Come along," to the green man.

But the wizard said, "Put the coffin down," and the green man put it down. Then the wizard said, "Young lady, you don't seem to know the rules that apply when you consult a wizard. Firstly, you can't refuse to use his solution, and, secondly, you can't refuse to pay his fee."

"Oh, very well," Oda said, "but I want some time to sit alone with my husband and say my farewells."

The wizard told the green man, "Take the coffin up to the top room." Then the wizard looked at Oda and smirked and said, "That's the bedroom, and you have till nightfall to say your farewells."

After that, the green man picked up the coffin and carried it up the stairs, Oda following. When they got to the top room, the green man put the coffin down and Oda said, "Look at the mess you've gotten me into with your false pro-

mises of help."

The green man said, "I can see now I should never have promised anything on behalf of another person." After that he said, "If my master the wizard won't help you, then I must, but I don't know what to do."

"Give me a moment to think," Oda said, and she sat down on Adrego's coffin and thought. After a while she said, "How will be wizard send my husband to his home?"

"I don't know for sure," the green man said, "but I think he'll use a flying spell."

"How do you cast a flying spell?" Oda asked.

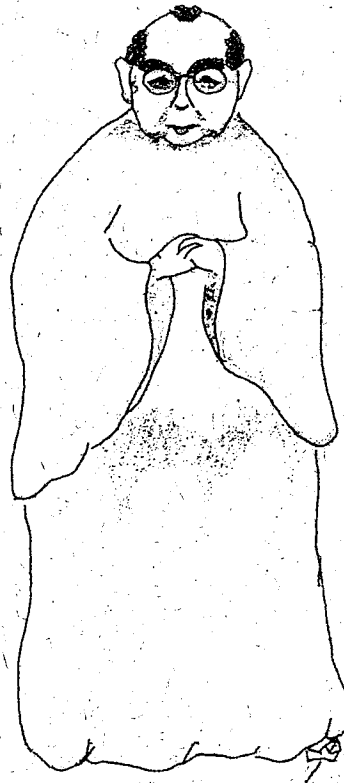
"I'm not able to," the green man said, "but all the wizard does is name the object and its destination, and after he does that the object flies off."

Oda stood up and said, "Help me open the coffin."

"I'll have to get a chisel," the green man said. Then he went to the wizard's machine shop and got a chisel and brought it back. The wizard was shut in his laboratory, brewing a love potion, so the green man didn't run into him. When he got back to the top room, the green man pushed the chisel in under the coffin's lid, then pushed down on the chisel, so it lifted the coffin's lid a little way and loosened the nails. He did this several times, working around the coffin till all the nails were loose. After he'd loosened the nails he lifted off the coffin's lid. A terrible stench came up out of the coffin. The green man looked into it and said, "It seems to me your husband is overdue for burial."

"I think you're right," Oda said. She looked around the room, then went to the bed and pulled the covers back, then said, "Help me put Adrego in the wizard's bed."

"All right," the green man said, "but I wish I knew what you were doing."



Then he took hold of Adrego's shoulders, and Oda took hold of Adrego's feet, and they carried the corpse to the bed and laid it there. Then Oda pulled the covers up over it. After that Oda said, "I can handle things from here."

"I hope so," the green man said, and he left, going down to work in the wizard's herb garden. Oda sat down and waited for nightfall. She said, "I'm going to have to leave you here, husband. I'm sorry, but it can't be helped. When push comes to shove, the living must look after themselves."

When dark came, so did the wizard. Oda heard him coming up the stairs, and she climbed into the coffin and lay down in it. The wizard opened the door. The room was dark. The wizard said, "Where are you? Why haven't you lit the lamp?"

"I'm in bed," Oda said. "And I didn't light the lamp because it seems to me what we're about to do ought to be done in the dark."

"Very well," the wizard said, and he came into the room and shut the door behind him.

Oda said, "Before you get in bed, fulfill your part of our agreement and send Adrego's coffin to his home."

"Very well," the wizard said. Then he said, "Listen to me, coffin -

Now I give  
Breath to live,  
Eyes to spy,  
Wings to fly,  
Wit to know  
Where to go."

As he spoke, the coffin's wood grew soft and began to move in and out around Oda, and she heard the sound of breathing. The coffin kept the same shape it had had before, and Oda could see out its open top. She heard the sound of wings flapping and the sound of things crashing onto the floor.

"Stop that, coffin," the wizard shouted. "You'll wreck my room."

Oda said, "You gave it no legs. It can't get to the window except by flying."

The wizard said, "You're right," then said:

"Legs to bear  
Out of here."



Then Oda felt the coffin stand up and walk to the window. It climbed up onto the window sill and stopped a moment. "Get going," the wizard said.

The coffin leaped out, spread its wings, and flew.

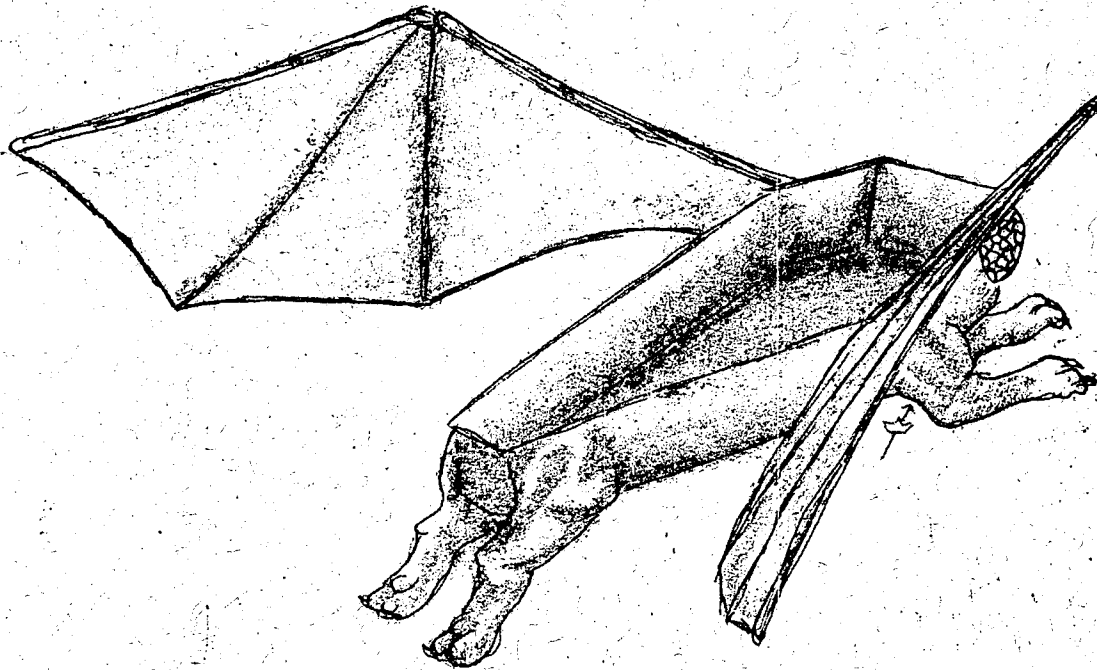
If the wizard hadn't had hayfever, he would've noticed the odor in his bedroom and realized that it could hardly be Oda. As it was, the wizard noticed nothing but said, "Here I come," and groped his way to the bed and got in. Then he embraced Adrego's corpse, then said, "Yeugh," and let go. He snapped his fingers twice and a fireball appeared above his head, and he was able to see what he'd been embracing. He said, "Yeugh," again.

Then he got out of bed and looked around and saw the coffin lid and the chisel lying on the floor. He ran to the window and shouted, "Come back," but the coffin was already out of hearing.

For a long while Oda lay where she was, listening to the coffin's wings flap and the air rush by. Then she sat up and looked over the side of the coffin. She saw nothing except darkness underneath. Above her there were stars. After a while the moon came up: a thin sickle that gave almost no light. It was cold, and Oda had no cloak. She sat and shivered, her arms wrapped around her, and watched the coffin's wings, which she could just barely make out, go up and down. At last the coffin began to descend. Oda looked over the side. Below there were clustered lights. The coffin circled the lights two times, then came down, swooping low over the rooftops and landing in a yard between two houses, both of them dark. Then it tilted to one side, dumping Oda out onto the cobblestones, and then it took off again. It



had trouble getting off the ground and made a lot of noise flapping its wings. Somebody in one of the houses called, "What's all that racket?" then lit a lamp. The coffin flew up past the lit window, and Oda got her first good look at it. It had two eyes in front that were as big around as hen's eggs. They were bulgy and multifaceted, like insects' eyes. Its wings were bat-like, and it had four short, stubby legs with claw-feet. "I don't expect to see the like of that in the near future," Oda said.



The coffin flew over the roof of one of the houses and out of sight. Oda stood up and said to herself, "I don't see why I should look up my in-laws. They'd only ask about Adrego, and I'd have to tell them he died and I've lost his corpse."

So she walked out of the yard and wandered around town till she found an inn. She pounded on the inn door till the innkeeper stuck his head out an upper window and said, "What is it?" Oda asked for a room, and the innkeeper said, "It's too late."

"It's never too late to make money," Oda said, and she shook her purse so the coins in it clinked.

"You're right about that," the innkeeper said. He came downstairs and let her inside, saying "Suspicious-looking guests have to pay in advance."

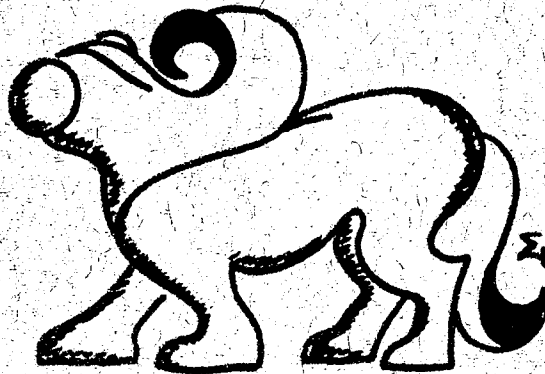
Oda paid him and got her room. In the morning, after breakfast, she went out and found a caravan that was setting out for her country, and bought passage with it.

The wagoners had gotten home ahead of Oda and told everyone she'd been captured by robbers. They said, it seemed likely to them the robbers had killed Oda after they'd had their way with her. As you might expect, the wagoners were pretty embarrassed when Oda turned up alive, unrobbed and unraped, with her own tale to tell about what had happened in the forest.

The wagoners were arrested, tried, convicted and sentenced to life at hard labor in the state silver mines. Conditions in the silver mines being what they were, the wagoners did not serve long terms.

As for Oda, she never remarried. Instead, she devoted herself to her husband's business, and in time she became very rich indeed.

The coffin, by the way, never returned to the wizard, but flew around for several days, confusing astrologers, bird hunters, weather prophets and other sky watchers. Then the spell wore off, and it fell out of the sky into the sea and floated for a while, then sank.



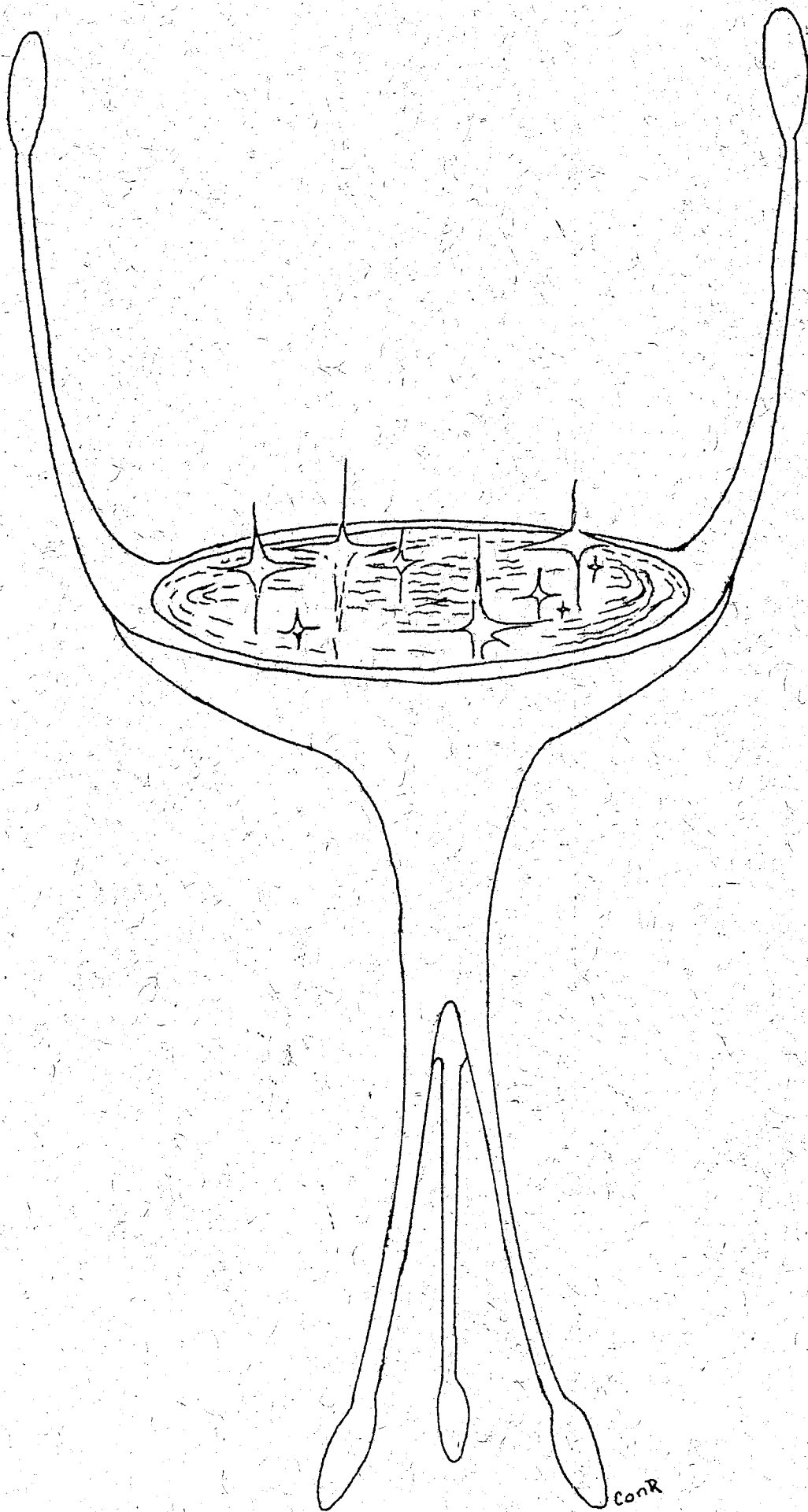
A Modest Propuzzle

by Miriam Z. Langsam

A. QVS XSSB JW KSYSB GOSMB/MBDRKT VSBS TSMB

B. KSOB T AMXO M KCHN NC M VCJ CQ KCHX VTXO JSMJ FMTN

SGADJE NGADJE T MVKMEF DME TJ OZJHM



ConR

# More Lines We'd Like to Hear

Carolyn Hillard

"There's a stain of cruelty on your shiny armour, Captain."

"Don't worry about it. Spock shines it every night. . ."

Spock: "I've spent my life learning to control my emotions."

Chapel: "And they say I'm wasting my time. . ."

"I'm beginning to realize just how big this ship is. . . ."

"Well, Captain, if you wanted to know where the officers' washroom was, why didn't you just ask?"

"And is there nothing which can disturb that cycle, Mr. Spock?"

"What did you have in mind, Lieutenant?"

"Art thee Vulcan -- or art thee Human?"

"Neither, ma'm. Ah'm just a little ole country doctah, makin' mah rounds. . . ."

"Vulcan eyes are very discerning too."

". . .but are you absolutely sure that it was Mr. Spock who had the monitor installed in your shower unit, Yeoman?"



# Elementary, my dear Captain

Pat Gildersleeve

The quality that distinguished STAR TREK from most science fiction, in whatever medium, is that the show gave us good science fiction, but with a cast of characters we could really be interested in, and care about. It is this aspect, as much as the science fiction, that explains its astonishing popularity. Critics have often commented that science fiction is strong on ideas and plot, but weak on characterization. STAR TREK's creator, in an inspired moment, borrowed three of the most popular characters in modern fiction, renamed them Kirk, Spock, and McCoy, and imposed them on a space adventure background, thus raising ST from just another space opera to a broadcasting phenomenon.

Captain Kirk, as we know from THE MAKING OF STAR TREK, was inspired originally by Captain Horatio Hornblower, hero of the HORNBLOWER series, by C. S. Forester. The parallel between a ship's captain and a starship's captain is obvious.

Dr. McCoy is clearly a copy of good old Doc Adams of GUNSMOKE, twenty years younger and practicing medicine on a starship instead of in Dodge City. Doc himself reminds us of kindly old Dr. Christian of radio days, and many other doctors in movies and on tv. But he is such a loveable character it is a pleasure to meet him anywhere, even in outer space.

But what about Spock? There is something tantalizingly familiar about him. Have we perhaps met him before in science fiction? Only on occasion. He is reminiscent of the Overlords in Arthur C. Clarke's story, CHILDHOOD'S END. These were benevolent aliens who had to keep their appearance secret, because they looked like Earthmen's conception of Satan. Closer, perhaps, is R. Daneel Olivaw, the robot detective of Isaac Asimov's novels, CAVES OF STEEL and THE NAKED SUN. There is quite a bit of R. Daneel in Spock's demeanor, and his precise way of speaking. But R. Daneel is a robot; he has none of Spock's inner conflicts.

Who, then, does Spock continually remind us of? Sherlock Holmes? Impossible! One is a Victorian Englishman, a detective, at home in a world of hansom cabs, gaslight, and London fogs. The other is an alien, a science officer, warping around the galaxy in a starship. What can they possibly have in common?

Quite a bit, when you begin to think about it. For instance, consider their physical similarities. Both men are tall, lean, angular of feature, athletic of build, able to withstand a good bit of physical punishment, and to defend themselves if necessary. They are alike in their devotion to logic, and their distrust of emotion. Consider this de -





scription: "All emotions. . .were abhorrent to his cold, precise but admirably balanced mind. He was, I take it, the most perfect reasoning and observing machine that the world has ever seen. . . .he never spoke of the softer passions, save with a jibe and a sneer." McCoy describing Spock, right? Wrong! Watson describing Holmes (A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA.)

Holmes and Spock have similar attitudes toward women; they are polite, considerate, but detached. They have steered clear of emotional involvements, although Holmes was more successful at this than Spock, who has had several notable lapses. Both men have encyclopedic minds, and are able - and willing - to deliver impromptu lectures on any number of obscure subjects. Both are intensely curious, and have developed their powers of observation far beyond that normal to ordinary people. Both have keenly analytical minds, and derive their greatest satisfaction from using them. Each is basically a loner, but enjoys a close friendship with one person. In one way, Kirk and McCoy perform a function similar to Watson's; they provide the normal man's point of view, in contrast to the detached, scientific logic of Holmes-Spock. If Holmes' memoirs had been written by the cynical Dr. McCoy, instead of the worshipful Dr. Watson, we would have a somewhat different view of the great detective.

As a hobby, Holmes keeps extensive scrap-books on crime, which he spends hours clipping and indexing. Spock's bridge position is at the Library Computer station, and in this capacity it is his job to program and index the computer. He obviously does it thoroughly and well, for he is able to find instantly any bit of information the computer can logically be expected to contain.

Both Holmes and Spock show a great deal of compassion and kindness, but each would deny it or try to justify it logically. Both men are intensely loyal to those they consider deserving of their loyalty. They both like to relax in their quarters with a musical instrument - Holmes with his violin, Spock with his Vulcan harp.

However, the parallel will stretch only so far. There are certain crucial differences between Spock and Holmes as well. Holmes gets bored and restless if his keen mind is not challenged. Spock has greater inner resources, thanks to the stoic training of his Vulcan heritage. He never becomes depressed because there is nothing to challenge him, and one cannot imagine Spock taking cocaine, or any other drug, to relieve boredom. Holmes, too, gave up this habit under Dr. Watson's urging, but he continually struggled with black moods between cases. Holmes is inseparable from his pipe, a habit Spock would abhor. Holmes is capable of practical jokes on his friends, while Spock constantly denies having a sense of

humor at all. This is not true\*, but his humor is very subtle. Holmes is a master of disguise, but unfortunately Spock's nature makes disguise difficult. He usually gets caught fairly soon. When you have pointed ears and an inability to lie, it is hard to maintain a deception for long. Holmes' rooms are notoriously messy and cluttered. On the few occasions we were permitted to glimpse Spock's quarters, they were a model of military neatness. It is difficult to imagine Spock using the wall of his quarters for target practice, as Holmes once did. Holmes seems to be at peace with himself and his world. Spock is a halfbreed, at home nowhere, and trying constantly to reconcile his two incompatible natures.

But weighing the evidence on both sides, it is clear that Spock is much more like Holmes than he is different. It is easy to picture them working harmoniously together, with a good deal of mutual respect. If Spock were acquainted with Holmes, his opinion of the human race would be considerably higher.

However, there is the final, striking parallel in the careers of these two characters; both became legends in their own time. Each is more real to his followers than the actual people these followers meet every day. Each man generated an incredibly large and loyal group of fans; is there really any basic difference between the Baker Street Irregulars and STAR TREK fans?

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle tired of Holmes, and tried to kill him, but the fans would not hear of it. They bombarded the man with thousands of letters, demanding the return of their hero, until, in selfdefense, he resurrected Holmes and went on with the stories. The network tired of STAR TREK and tried to kill it, but again, the fans gave them no peace. A steady barrage of letters has kept STAR TREK, and Spock, alive. The network has tried to placate them with a Saturday morning animation, but the fans, while grateful for this crumb, will settle for nothing less than a return of ST in live action, either as a movie or a TV series.

ST fans can take some comfort in the fact that even the death of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle could not put an end to Sherlock Holmes. He continues to live, in new stories by other authors, in print, on stage, in movies, and occasionally even on TV. In a like manner, ST books have been commercially successful, and some very good fiction appears regularly in the fanzines.

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\*Spock's budding sense of humor was apparently stunted in early childhood by some unfortunate incident with a practical joke, when he was about 5 years old, according to the testimony of Young Spock in "Yesteryear."

Whatever the outcome in the battle between the fans and the Paramount-NBC brass, it is certain that ST, and the characters it created, have a permanent niche in the history of 20th-century folklore.

# GOSPEL

BY

ELEANOR A

ARNASON



I can see bad weather coming:  
Wind and rain and snow.  
Brother fighting brother,  
We will lay each other low.

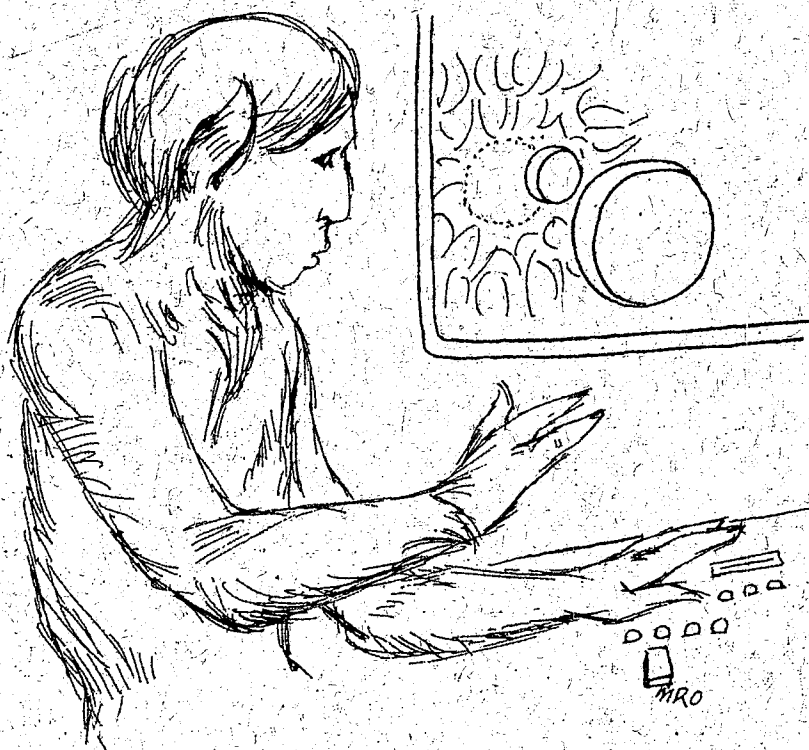
Ancient monsters rising  
From the caverns of the mind:  
What fortress can defy them?  
What weapon can defend?

All our crimes are brought together,  
How can we explain?  
When the oceans rise as vapor  
And fire falls like rain.

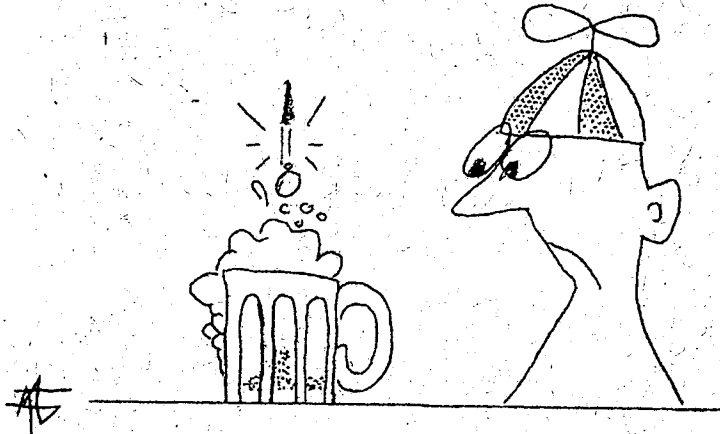
# CHEETAH AVENGED

MARIAN TURNER

See the riding apes --  
Talking apes!  
See the man called Taylor as he gasps and  
gawks and gapes.  
How they laugh and joke and chatter  
And turn idioms around!  
See them make their crossbows clatter  
Just as if it didn't matter  
That the man they bruise and batter.  
Is an astronaut aground.  
Taylor flees, flees, flees  
(more than not, upon his knees)  
From gorillas and orangutans to chimps in  
leather drapes --  
Oh, the apes, apes, apes, apes,  
Apes, apes, apes --  
Oh, the futuristic furor of the apes!



Hear the ranting ape --  
 Soldier ape!  
 Preaching wild-eyed glory while his fellows  
 dream of rape.  
 And he says, "The land forbidden  
 By our leader and our God  
 Must now nevermore be hidden!"  
 So another 'naut is ridden  
 Down until he drops, unbidden,  
 Into New York under sod.  
 Faces bright, bright, bright  
 Turn his panic into fright.  
 Now behold the planet shrouded by a cloud of  
 mushroom shape --  
 Oh, the apes, apes, apes, apes, apes,  
 Apes, apes, apes --  
 Oh, the dreadful demolition of the apes!



See the baby ape --  
 Future ape!  
 See Ricardo Montalban help safeguard its escape  
 While Cornelius and Zera lie expiring in despair,  
 She had pled, but none would hear 'er  
 Not for love and not for lira.  
 Thus begins another era  
 In the war of Hide and Hair.  
 Then I scream, scream, scream!  
 Two to go?! A madman's dream!  
 Next the "Battle" then the "Conquest" --  
 I am up to here with apes!  
 With the apes, apes, apes, apes, apes,  
 Apes, apes, apes --  
 With the planet after planet of the apes!

# CONVERSATION AT A NAVIGATION CONSOLE

ANNA MARY HALL

Sulu stretched and yawned. These 'night' watches were certainly nice and peaceful. Little happened; there was no captain breathing over your shoulder. Spock usually devoted the time to some serious problem of mathematics or logic, and it took an actual emergency to attract his attention.

Chekov gave a very small snore. Sulu poked him in the ribs and hissed, "Get your eyes open! Talk to me!"

Chekov shook his head to dispel the cobwebs. "What about?"

"Anything. I remember you mentioning once that you had a Vulcan roommate at the Academy. You never said any more about it."

With a shiver Chekov said, "We weren't in the mood, if I remember the occasion correctly." He and Sulu both turned to look at Mr. Spock. He was at his position, safe and well, but the habit of checking to be sure had not yet worn off. Chekov looked back at his instruments and touched a control that really didn't need adjusting. "Srill and I roomed together for one semester."

"Aren't room assignments still for a year?" Sulu asked in a puzzled voice.

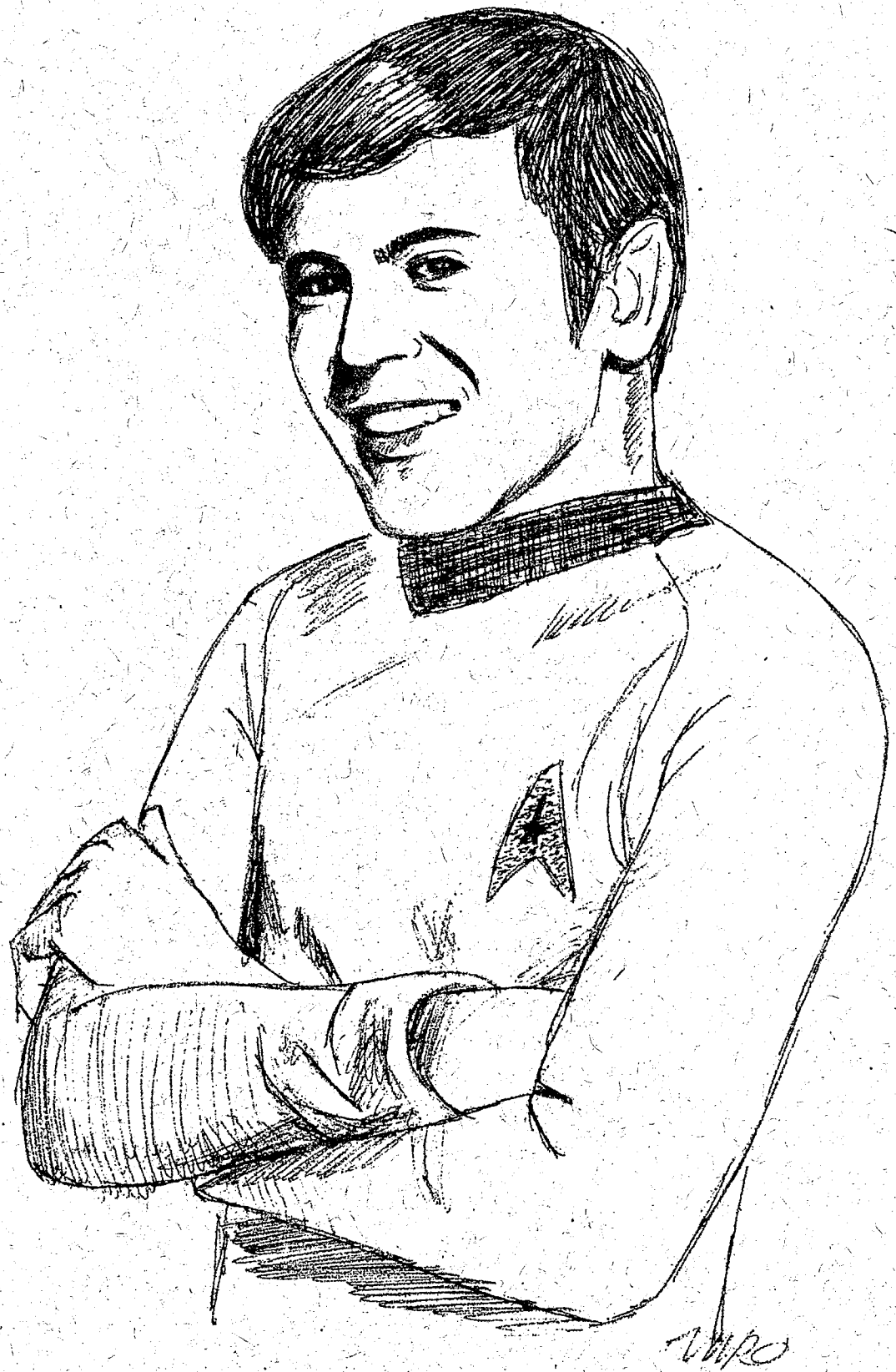
"We were a bad influence on each other." Chekov grinned. "Srill is the only Vulcan who was almost expelled from Starfleet Academy."

"What for?" Sulu inquired, while he tried to imagine a Vulcan being a bad influence.

"I talked him into helping me do the field research for a report."

Sulu's eyebrows asked the question.

"I titled it 'A Report on the Compacting and Cohesive Qualities of Crystalized H<sub>2</sub>O'," Chekov said with a sly smile.







Sulu sat in thoughtful silence, then said, "Regulation 25, Sub-section 2. The part pertaining to winter conduct."

"Right."

"Why weren't you expelled?"

"Srill got me out of it. I had already cleared him. It was easy to prove he saw no connection between studying the physical properties of snow and a reg forbidding the throwing of snowballs.

"Srill convinced the Superintendent of the illogic of the regulation. He wove in the fact that the wording used a colloquial term - snowball - rather than an accurate scientific description. He touched on the fact that the regulation was outmoded; it had actually been written at a time when windows were breakable. He then began on the subject of responsibility. How did they expect to trust us with valuable and dangerous equipment if we were not even capable of regulating our own lives in such minor details?

"Schubert ordered us out about then. I think he wanted to laugh, but wouldn't in front of us."

Chekov lapsed back into silence, but there was such an air of expectancy about him that Sulu knew there was more to the story. He considered gossip he'd heard about the Academy in recent years. It was surprising this incident hadn't been talked about. This would have been two or three years ago.... Sulu's eyes widened in surprise. "Your class is the one that rewrote the rule book. Did this...?"

Chekov nodded. "After letting us - me - stew for 24 hours, Schubert called us back to his office. He said the whole book needed to be revised. Since we'd brought it to his attention, we could just take charge of doing it."

"That still doesn't explain why you were roommates for only one semester," Sulu complained.

"By the time the book was finished, Srill and I had discovered we worked well together. If his logic wouldn't solve a problem, my intuition might suggest a method. So - we started a consulting service for the other cadets. Problems Solved At Reasonable Rates. Our solutions must have been a little too individualistic. We were asked - ordered - to discontinue the service after only three days. And then there was the debating team, partnership chess, computer games theory...."

Sulu nodded, in silent empathy with whoever had dealt with the pair. "How did they separate you?"

"We were within a semester of graduation. Starfleet wanted a new ensign to send along on one of the deep probe missions. Schubert offered it to one of us. Srill went," Chekov concluded softly.

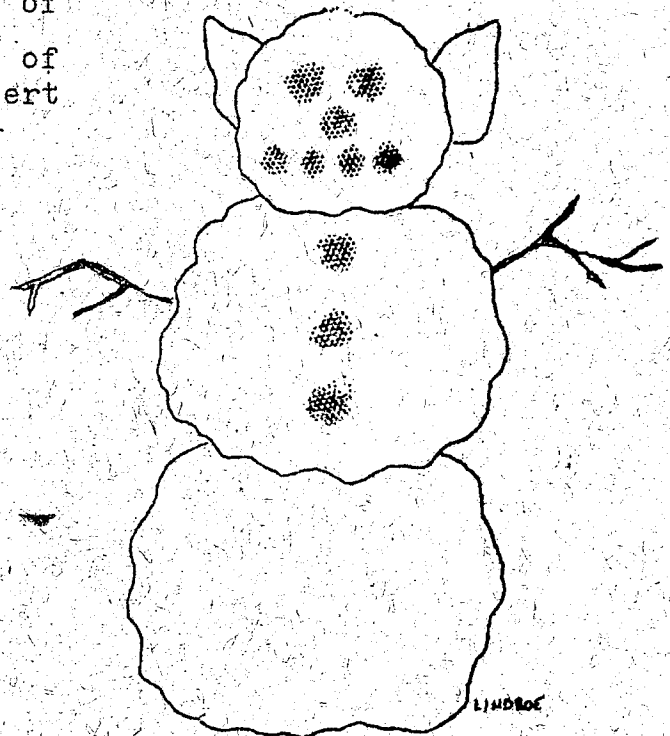
"How did you decide?"

Chekov grinned. "Logically, of course. We flipped a coin."

"What portion of that anecdote is true?" inquired a cold, precise voice.

Chekov closed his eyes in silent agony, then answered steadily, "Every word, sir, every word."

An elegant Vulcan eyebrow climbed skyward. "What singular behavior."





# The Searcher

by  
Nancy Gindice

Did he find her sleeping there,  
head pillowed on her streaming hair -  
a silky sea of waves more fair  
than bright-heat in the dawning air?

Long had he sought her in the cold,  
long had he searched stars growing old -  
long had he journeyed far and bold  
back and back as the time-stream rolled.

Some say he still seeks, not forsaking -  
some say he even now is waking  
Zarabeth, whose heart was breaking,  
she who waited for his taking.

Some say he did not find her there,  
for never came they back again.  
But those who hear with mind and heart  
say he has chosen not to part  
from she who out-burns morning fair -  
Zarabeth of the shining hair.

# A SNEAKY MURDER MYSTERY BY MIRIAM Z. LANGSAM

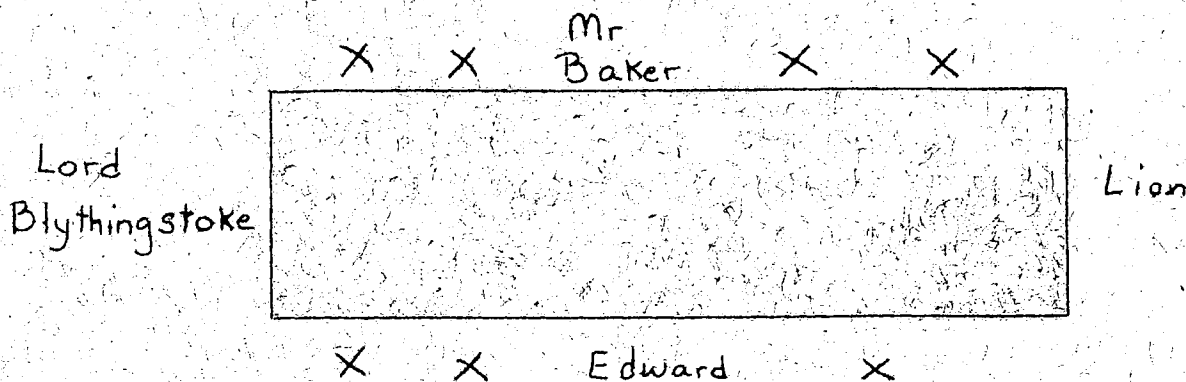


At the masked Christmas ball held annually at Blythingstoke Castle, there were five couples present, in addition to Lord Blythingstoke, who was cruelly murdered at the stroke of midnight. All the servants had gone, and the dogs outside prevented intruders from entering. Before the butler left, he dressed each guest in a floor-length black robe. Each robe had a hood with a unique decoration on it. When so dressed, only an individual's eyes were visible. The person wearing the hood could not see his own symbol, nor could anyone remove his or her own costume. This quirk of the Lord Blythingstoke was the special feature of his Christmas ball.

Since no one could have obtained entrance, the murderer must have been one of the ten people at the dinner. The police noted that when Lord Blythingstoke was found mortally

wounded, several people heard him say his murderer was "Richard the Lion-Hearted, but not. . . ."

1. The Taylors came with the suckling pig; Matilda brought salad, Mrs. Miller the bread and Mary the dessert. Anne brought nothing, since she had been sick.
2. Before dinner, John had a heated argument with Lord Blythingstoke, which was witnessed by two people - one wearing a cross and the other a lion symbol. Anne said she was one, but didn't know who the other was.
3. Everyone recognized William Fletcher, who was wearing a feather, since he was 6'8" tall, a good foot taller than anyone else present.
4. Several people suggested that the tree was either Mary or Elizabeth, since some blonde hair was sticking out of that hood, and they were the only blondes present.
5. Mr. Baker, sitting in the middle of the table on the left side of Lord Blythingstoke (who sat at the head of the table) observed the circle, the hammer, William Fletcher, and the fish on his side of the table.
6. Edward sat directly across from Mr. Baker and observed the tree, cross and rose on his side of the table.
7. All agreed that the lion sat directly opposite Lord Blythingstoke. Anne later admitted to sitting opposite Lord Blythingstoke, with William Fletcher on her right and Henry Miller on her left.
8. Mrs. Baker and Elizabeth sat on William Fletcher's side of the table, while Eleanor and Mrs. Fletcher sat on the other side. Richard said his wife was sitting on his side of the table.



9. After dinner, the cross, the circle and the star started for the library, before Lord Blythingstoke reminded them that this evening there would be no brandy for the men. Henry remembered being one of the three men, following the circle toward the library.

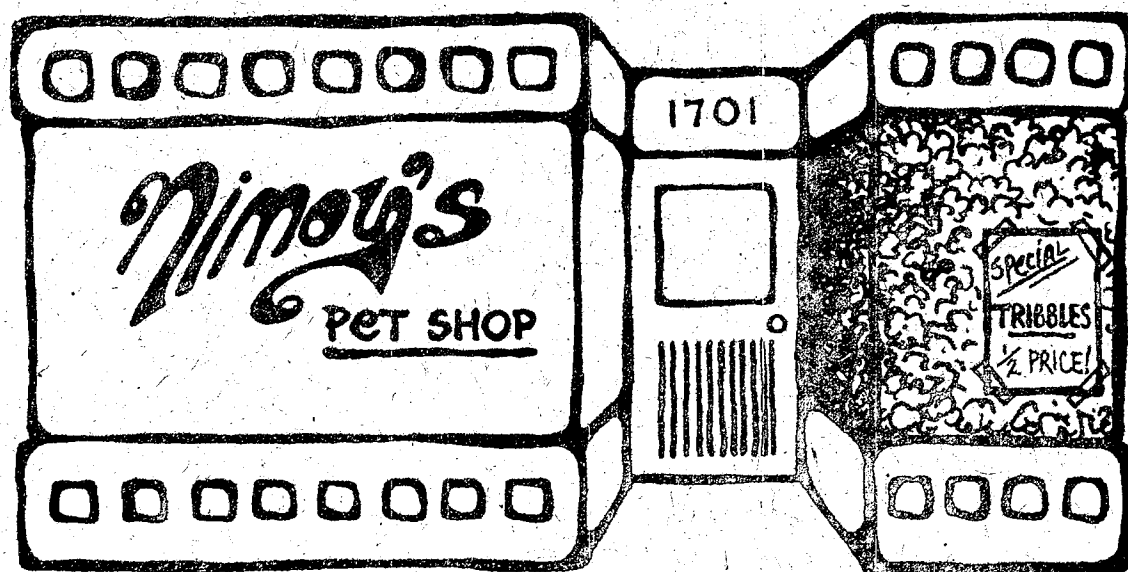
10. Henry was sure that his wife Eleanor was the rose, because of her perfume.

11. John's wife Matilda and Anne's husband Edward were together when John, wearing his star, came out of the study shouting that Lord Blythingstoke had been knifed. Fletcher's wife fainted and someone remarked that the 'tree' had fallen, referring to her symbol.

12. The sherriff identified Matilda's hammer hood by traces of her red hair and powder. The only people still wearing their hoods when the sherriff arrived were Mr. Smith (the sword) and Mrs. Smith (the lion). No one had heard any voices in the study.

13. Lord Blythingstoke was found clutching a picture of Richard the Lion-Hearted, obviously torn out of a book during the last seconds of life. The sherriff immediately arrested Richard.

Match the husbands and wives, their symbols, and determine the murderer.





# THE FREE ENTERPRISE

MARIAN TURNER

CONGRATULATIONS TO Ensign Ellis Manequin for being the first security person to make 21. When asked to what he attributed his amazing longevity he replied, "Close attention to the shore-party duty roster and a crawl-space between levels 3 and 4."  
-- OOPS! Hope we didn't let the cat out of the bag, Ellis!

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT. . . . The Captain offers a reward of twenty credits for information leading to the apprehension of the person or persons responsible for replacing last night's New Crewmembers' Orientation Film with the old Terran movie "Sail A Crooked Ship." The same person or persons is believed responsible for the similar breach of discipline last week, when the Motivational Training Film, "You, Your Officers, Your Ship" was replaced with the old Terran movie "Mister Roberts." The captain wishes to add that, if his potted palm is returned by 2400 hours, there will be no questions asked.

THIS PLANETOID  
IS COMPOSED  
OF IRON, NICKEL,  
MANGANESE,  
TITANIUM AND  
SULFUR IN A  
9-6 3-2-1  
RATIO...



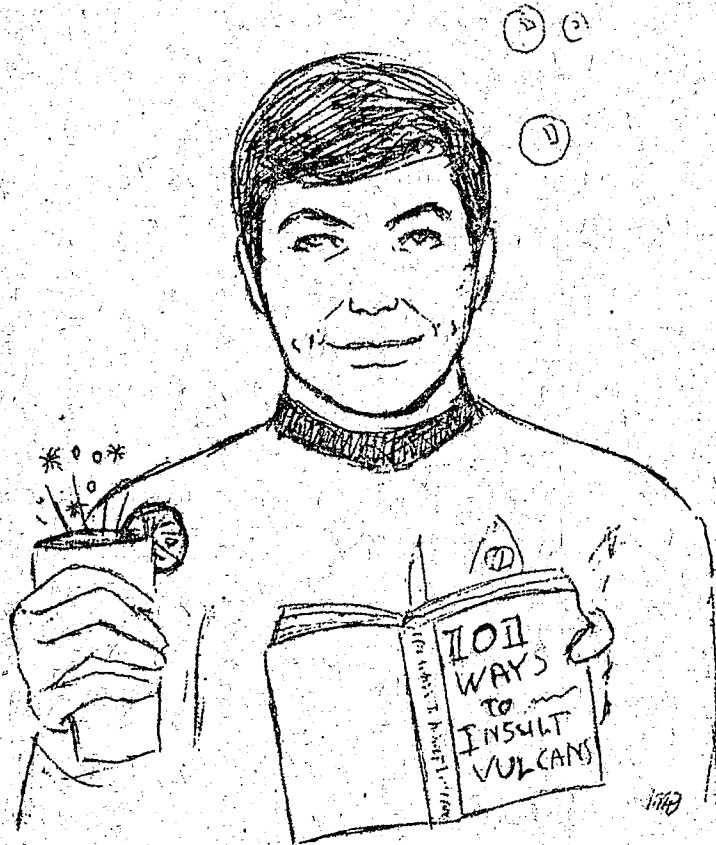
OUR FIRST ~~ANDROID~~ OFFICER



1100

43

COMMANDER Spock wishes to repeat "with stress" that there is no truth to the rumor that his first name is Voivode, nor was his mother's maiden name Tepes.



DATELINE SICKBAY -- What well-known medico was overheard offering to join a certain dark beauty in traction? When questioned later, the good doctor insisted, "There is nothing whatever between that girl and myself." We certainly couldn't argue with that haha.

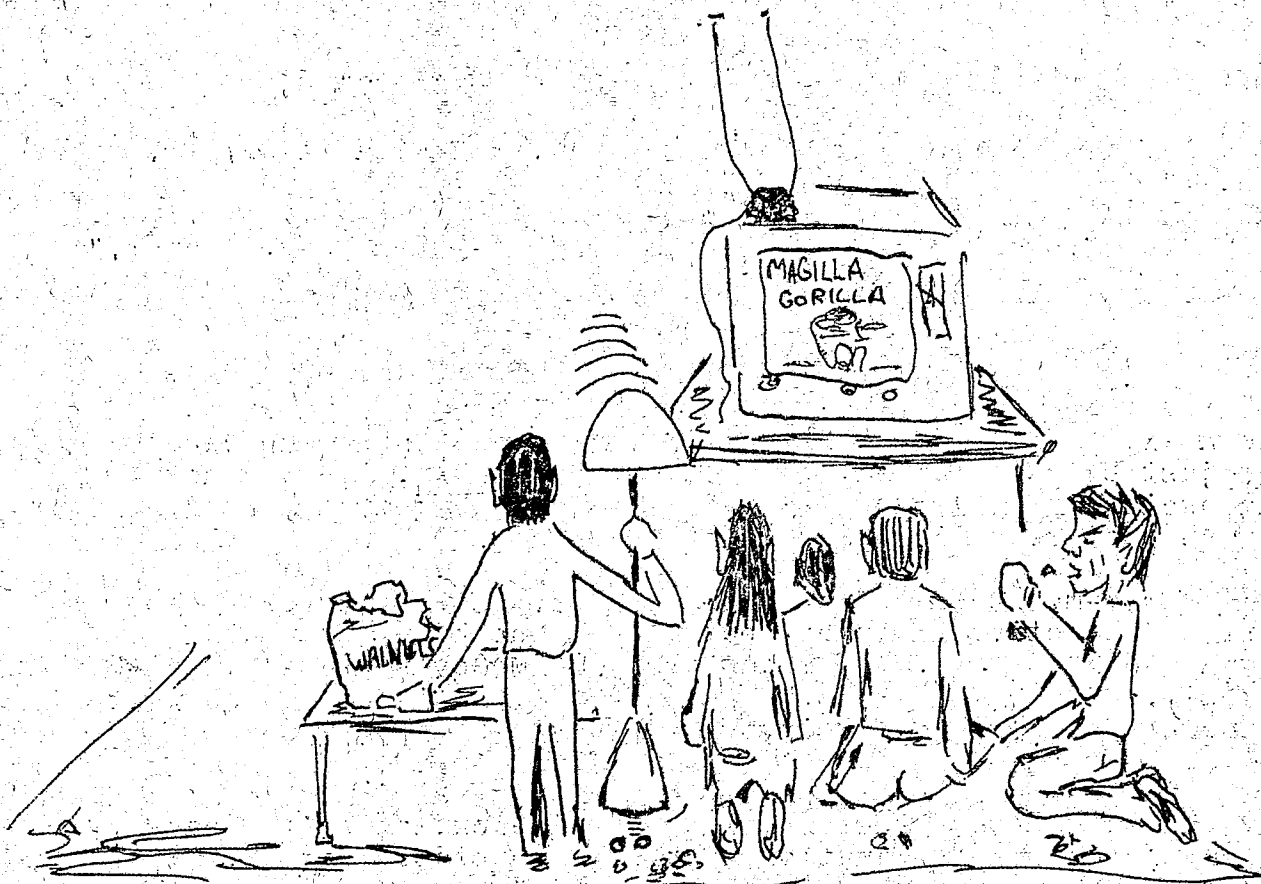
THE EDITORS of this paper are looking for the author or authoress of the poem scrawled on the door of a certain to-be-nameless First Officer which reads: "Roses are red, Violets are blue, Spinach is green, And so are you." We would like to formally state in print what we have been insisting in private ever since the infamous verse appeared: that THE EDITORS OF THIS PAPER ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE. Whether or not we are responsible for any in the future depends entirely on whether or not the author or authoress of above-quoted poem comes forward as requested.

VOIVODE VLAD "Dracula" Tepes wishes to state "strongly" that he is in no way related to a certain green-blooded ship's officer, and will not be held responsible for his debts.

DATELINE ENGINE ROOM -- Chief Engineer Scott has definitely decided not to press charges against Ensign Chekov in the Case of the Whip-stitched Kilt. Chekov pleaded guilty on the grounds of giving the Committee for Finding Out What Scotsmen Wear Under Their Kilts a sporting chance. The CFOWSWUTK wishes to express its thanks to Ensign Chekov for a job well tried, and to Chief Engineer Scott for electing to let the hem-line stand as it now is. Hubba-hubba. (?? - Ed.)

THE TRANSPORTER Room is now off-limits to crewmembers with a pechant for drinking off duty, due to circumstances not to be discussed until notification of next of kin has been effected.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE



"They're doing what with my  
5,493.6 year-old lirpa?"

J. Alfasner

# HERE WE GO AGAIN

LEE BURWASSER

"Jim! What's wrong?"

Spock knelt beside him, snapping instructions over his shoulder. "Uhura, get a medical team up here. Chekov, take the sensors." By then, Kirk had recovered enough to look around and shake his head to see if it rattled.

"Medical team on the way, sir."

"Wery strange readings, sir. Two unreconciled anomalies already."

"Did any of the rest of you feel any effect?"

"None." "No, sir." "Nothing, sir." "Not a thing, Mr. Spock."

"Nor I. Odd, that only the captain -- Over here, Doctor."

McCoy plied his scanner in silence. He stared at the final reading, then put it away. "What happened?"

"He was standing midway between the command chair and the navigation console when he collapsed. No apparent cause, but just before he fell, he appeared. . .dazed. He was not unconscious at any time. He did, however, appear confused. He does not recognize me."

"Hm-m-m," McCoy said noncommittally. Spock was being the perfect objective observer, but anyone who knew him would say he was worried sick. At least that was McCoy's tentative diagnosis. "Stretcher team." He stood up. "I'll tell you what I know as soon as I know anything."

"Evidence of extreme fatigue, no indication of the cause. No physiological explanation of his dazed state, either. At least he's been quiet; too quiet, maybe."

Spock set aside the readouts and crossed to Kirk's side. The Earthman stared at the Vulcan as though trying to recall someone he had known long ago.

"T.P. . . T' . . .

"Don't try to talk, Captain. Dr. McCoy has inundated your system with assorted brews."

Kirk's eyes flicked to McCoy.

"He recognizes me," McCoy said to Spock, so softly that no Earthman could hear him. "Something about me puzzles him, though."

Kirk looked back to Spock and tried to speak again, with less success than the first time.

"No one else appears to have been affected, Captain," Spock assured him. "The ship is unharmed. We have instituted periodical sweep checks of all systems, and all personnel have been instructed to report the onset of any symptoms similar to those you displayed."

Kirk gave no sign that he was at all comforted, but submitted to McCoy's hypo.

"There's something else you ought to see, Mr. Spock." McCoy fished a set of forms out of the depths of the sheaf on his desk and handed them over.

"Acquired-immune reactions: parabubonic, neomalaria. . . all the immunization series -- Mizar pox . . . Alkaid IV novotuberculin . . ." Spock flipped over the page and read on. "You have one flagged. Pseudoparachorea."

"According to the medical record, Jim never had it and never received immunization for it. It's a rare disease, unknown outside the Omega Orion mining worlds, and under control there. Jim's never been within a dozen parsecs of them."

"Indeed."

"There's more. Remember the Gideon affair?"

"I am unlikely to forget it, Doctor."

"Nor I. Which is why I noticed that Vegan choreal meningitis is not on the list. I ran the specific twice, to make sure. According to the medical scanners, Jim never had it. Now, does that make sense?"

"Doctor, 'makes sense' is ignorance rationalized. If your scanners are accurate, we must accept the data, whatever the consequences."

"Spock, I don't think I like what I think you're thinking."



Personal Log, star date 8375.1: delayed entry:

Once again I have been thrown into an alternate universe. The method of transfer seems to have more in common with the magnetic corridor of Lazarus than with the ion-disrupted beam transport I experienced once before. This universe is like my own -- with some startling exceptions.

At the time of my crossover, the sensors here recorded a vector-locus power surge and no less than three other anomalous phenomena, all apparently unrelated. T'Pok is going on the assumption that all four are connected, and connected with my crossover with her captain, in some way we don't know -- yet. She intends to find out.

So far, only T'Pok, the McCoy analogue, and I are aware of the situation, and this McCoy is not yet ready to believe it. These people have never before experienced alternate-universe phenomena, though T'Pok is of course aware of the theoretical possibility. At her suggestion, Dr. McCoy ran a molecule-by-molecule scan on me, coming up with medical data which confirmed my story to T'Pok's satisfaction, if not his own.

"Now what?"

T'Pok raised one eyebrow. "We wait."

"Wait! What for?"

"For data. Fortunately, it will be forthcoming without further urging. We have observed three, or perhaps four, anomalous phenomena, not counting your transfer. If, as I suspect, they are connected with your 'magnetic corridor', we shall soon be in possession of sufficient information to attack the problem of reversing the transfer and closing the corridor."

"You're not going to tell them that the anomalies are connected?"

"I am not yet certain that they all are."

"I am!"

"If you will forgive me, Captain Kirk, that is not expert testimony. We shall wait. And we must devise a cover story. Dr. McCoy, the mechanics of it would seem to be your department."

'McCoy' scowled impartially at them both. "You want me to keep him in sickbay?"

"Or in quarters. The important thing is to reassure the crew that the captain's absence does not of itself constitute a crisis."

"So?"

"Viewing the situation as the crew must be made to see it, we should be criminally negligent if we did not tentatively assume that the anomalies and the captain's collapse were in some way related. Therefore, it is entirely in keeping for you to subject him to exhaustive testing. It would go far toward explaining why the captain is no longer standing his watch. Properly done, you can avoid rousing any fear of his permanent disability."

'McCoy' turned to Kirk. "What do you say?"

"Me? I'm just a passenger." He was also lost in the convolutions of T'Pok's last speech. "T'Pok is in command."

'McCoy' raised his voice as they walked through the dispensary. ". . . see him straight to his quarters."

"Understood, Doctor."



"And you stay put."

"You might post a couple of interns outside my door," Kirk quipped. "Yes, I'll be good."

"You think you're okay now, just tired. You're not okay. You don't take it easy the next few days, you'll be in real trouble." 'McCoy' grinned shamefacedly. "End of lecture. Go catch up on your sleep."

Medical Log, star date 8375.1  
Chief Surgeon McCoy recording

I am worried about T'Pok. The alacrity with which she accepted the 'parallel universes' hypothesis, and her subsequent actions, may be no more than Vulcan rationality. Or it may be the beginning of something nasty.

T'Pok is entirely capable of command -- except for her total inability to inspire faith in men. She is aware of this, but she fights and tries to reject that awareness. If she sees this crisis as a chance to prove herself, to demonstrate her ability to command, she may do the ship and herself irreparable damage.

Kirk had little acting to do on the way to 'his' quarters. T'Pok kept up a running commentary on the measures taken and proposed to get to the bottom of the latest mystery, interspersed with assurances that any crewman or system displaying symptoms of falling prey to the effects of same would be immediately discovered and treated. All Kirk had to do was look as though he was paying close attention, which required no acting at all.

Two things fascinated him.

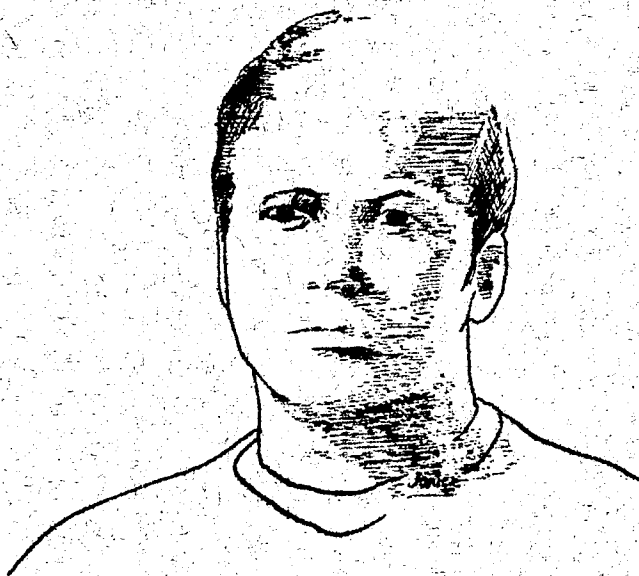
First, T'Pok herself. If the official version of the situation here had been the real situation on his own Enterprise, Spock would have taken exactly the same measures, issued exactly the same orders.

The second thing, which worried as well as fascinated him. . . . He brought it up as soon as they were alone.

"T'Pok. . . maybe I shouldn't say it. . . ."

"You are the one man aboard with previous experience of our circumstances. I shall be most grateful for anything you care to tell me."

Remembering at all times that it is not expert testimony.  
"Not that. This -- this cover story." T'Pok waited. Every hour of acquaintance showed her more like Spock. "Why do you



have to . . . deceive . . . the crew?"

"I do not enjoy it. I was trained to discover truth, not hide it. In the present situation, however, it is necessary."

"Necessary," Kirk repeated, not liking the taste. "Look here. If we ever learn to -- to control the corridor, to make transfer by choice instead of by accident. . . Well, we'll want to stay in touch. I'm going to spend my quarantine learning about you . . . what we can learn from each other, what help we can give each other."

"Your captain will be doing the same. And. . . you'll expect him -- you'll have a right to expect him to bring back a complete report. Or as complete as he can make it."

"If I have to report that you don't dare trust your crew with the facts, . . . Well, I'd like to have an explanation to report as well."

T'Pok nodded. "We are far from perfect, Captain Kirk. Among us, Earthmen are as willing to trust Vulcans as computers -- and as hesitant. Yes, I see it is the same with you. If the captain were dead, or incapacitated, protocol would hold the senior officers to me, and the men to the senior officers. However, none of the crewmembers have the confidence in me that they have in the captain, or in Chief Engineer

Kyle. If they were informed that the captain is not the captain, but someone who looks, talks and acts exactly like the captain -- further, that I have deduced from this the physical or parapsychical existence of an alternate universe -- I will not be able to hold them.

"Instead, I must let them convince me. In this way we shall be able to cope with the situation.

"There has never been a mutiny in Star Fleet. I do not intend that the Enterprise be the first."

Personal Log, star date 8375.1  
T'Pok recording:

I have decided to trust the analogue. He is clearly the product of a society whose mores are entirely compatible with ours. He is a virtual duplicate of the captain; mentally and physically, they differ only in 'acquired-immune reactions'.

//I may be accused of allowing emotional reaction to affect my judgment. This Kirk is an Earthman and a passionate Earthman, yet he treats me almost as we treat one another at home, not at all as Earthmen treat Vulcan women.

//I believe him. I believe that in his universe, my analogue is male. And I believe that this Kirk is his friend.//

I can come to no firm conclusion regarding his specific actions. He is, as he says, 'a passenger'; his behavior may reflect this status, and the ambiguous situation in which he finds himself. It is also possible that he is much closer to all his senior officers than the captain is to any of us.

Unless he was deliberately prevaricating (which is possible) he is also closer to, and more open with, his crew. I would not have had to spell out the necessity of the cover story to the captain. I judge the probability low to moderate that his denseness was in the nature of a test.

The analogue appears to have given no thought to the possibility of hostility between our Federations. Certainly he assumed from the beginning that once we accepted his story we would accept him. He has at no time displayed or expressed fear that we will fear him.

I lack data to make further observations at this time.

"Would one of you mind very much telling me what's happened?"

The Vulcan looked at McCoy. "Doctor?"

"Go ahead. He's all right, just confused."

"Mm." The Vulcan turned back to Kirk. "You must have some tentative hypothesis of your own, Captain Kirk."

"I feel like I'm in some practical joker's idea of fun. Everything the same, only different." He stared at the man with T'Pol's face. "You. . . McCoy. . . Where am I?"

"You are aboard the United Star Ship Enterprise, of the Star Fleet of the Federation of Planets. It seems strange because it is not your Enterprise. You are not in your own universe."

"My. . . own. . .?"

"You must be aware of the theoretical possibility of alternate spacetimes. We have had practical experience of them."

"We know that it is possible to open a 'corridor' between universes. Apparently, such a corridor has opened between yours and ours. The two are very much alike, and you are a close analogue of our captain. You and he were transferred each into the other's spacetime. We must restore you to your own ship, and retrieve our own captain."

"Mister. . . . What's your name, anyway?"

"I am Spock."

"S'Pol. Of course. Well, Mr. Spock, do you have any evidence? Any proof?"

"None which will convince you at this moment. It is unfortunate that you mistrust us, but understandable. We are presently engaged in locating the proximal focus of the corridor; when we succeed, you will return home. We do not insist on your trust. When you are home, and the corridor is closed, trust or distrust will be irrelevant."

"It's pretty irrelevant now." He looked at McCoy, who ought to have a blue-black star of scar tissue on his right temple, then back at Spock, who ought to be a woman. "I can't stop your doing whatever you want to do."

"We would appreciate your co-operation. Otherwise, we shall have to detail a guard. It is hardly the proper treatment for an envoy."

"Envoy?"

"What else?" said McCoy. "We've known other universes."

At least one is pretty hostile. You being so like our captain is a hopeful sign that our two Federations can be friends."

"A nice thought. (How do you know we're a federation?)

"But I can't give you my parole, gentlemen. You must realize that all you've given me is assertions. I've no way of knowing if they're true or not."

"Isn't a Vulcan's word enough?" McCoy asked somewhat belligerently.

"You claim this is another universe. How can I be sure that Vulcans are the same here as in my own?" McCoy didn't like that. Spock only nodded; just like T'Pok. "No, gentlemen. All I can promise is that I won't open hostilities until it seems necessary."

"And you won't warn us in advance." McCoy grinned wryly. "You're one among four hundred, and surprise is your only advantage."

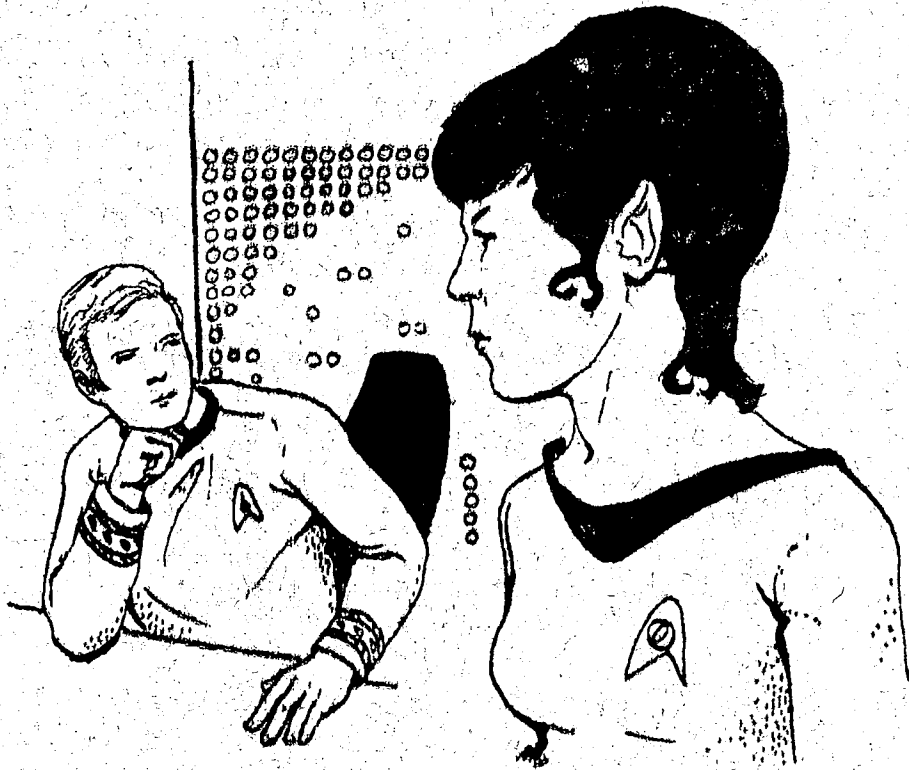
Spock apparently missed the byplay, lost in thought. Then he looked up; he'd come to a decision. (Damn all the galaxies, he was T'Pok!)

"The crew is aware of the situation. They will be informed that you have the freedom of the ship. They will extend you all courtesy. If, however, you claim to be our own captain returned, you will be escorted immediately to sick bay for examination, where Dr. McCoy will ascertain which Captain Kirk you are. Meanwhile, we shall devote our efforts to the problem of the corridor, and you will learn that we are to be trusted."

He turned to the door. "If you will remain here, Captain, I shall inform you as soon as the announcement is made."

Personal Log, star date 8376.5: delayed entry:

T'Pok's 'cover story' is working well. I remain for the most part in 'my' quarters. T'Pok spends a good deal of time here, and 'McCoy' drops around often enough to keep the cover intact. My analogue's yeoman, Wilhelmina von Schönbrün, is the only crewmember not cleared for the facts to remain in prolonged contact with me. T'Pok is of the opinion that I am enough like my analogue to fool Yeoman von Schönbrün, and that forbidding her 'my' cabin would be an unwarranted breach of routine.



T'Pok has set up a security lock -- my voice-command, hers, and 'McCoy's' -- under which we have recorded all data concerning the parallel universes, along with our thoughts, conclusions and outright guesses on the problem of crossover.

"Is there any way to tell how far -- if that's the word -- how far we are from my universe?"

"We shall have to evolve a descriptive terminology," T'Pok agreed. She fell silent a moment, frowning in concentration. "I believe your usage is correct, S'James," she said at last.

--(S'James? Kirk wondered. Well, she needed a handle to the analogue situation, and it didn't matter, really, what it was. . .)--

"In our present situation, the only meaningful unit of measurement is the power-consumption necessary to effect an exchange between universes. By my calculations, it would take seventy to eighty per cent of our total power output to re-open the corridor to your spacetime.

"However, we may not have to re-open it. It may still

be open. If this is the case, it will take much less power to return you and retrieve our captain."

"So we're that much 'closer'. Good to know, but what makes you think the corridor's still open?"

Kirk bit back a smile at T'Pok's almost-expression. Evidently, she approved of 'S'James'.

"Our sensors show a continued anomaly, which they are unable to resolve. I believe I know how to test the hypothesis under consideration, and the arrangements for doing so are now under way. As you are the most familiar with the situation, perhaps you will wish to be present."

"I'd like to."

"I shall inform you when we are ready."

Personal Log, star date 8376.5: delayed entry continued:

Like the McCoy analogue, T'Pok calls me 'James ' in private, to distinguish me from her own captain. But she adds the Vulcan masculine prefix. Whether this signifies anything important about her attitude toward me or my home Federation, I am not sure. On other evidence, however, I believe I have convinced her that we are good neighbors. Certainly she has accepted me as a full partner in the work of getting the Captains Kirk sorted out and back home.

T'Pok and 'Nurse Chapel' escorted him to the shuttlecraft hanger. (Now, why didn't this 'Christine' marry her 'Dr. Corby'?) The nurse's presence was officially a concession to 'McCoy'. T'Pok -- of course -- was meticulous about maintaining the cover.

The shuttlecraft itself was full of instrument banks that meant very little to Kirk. T'Pok gestured him and 'Christine' to a pair of forward seats and began the routine of initiating launch. Except for the eerily familiar/unfamiliar T'Pok, Kirk might have been back in his own universe.

With the shuttlecraft exactly half a light from the Enterprise and motionless with respect to her, T'Pok turned to Kirk. "Captain, will you take over astrogation while I activate the sensors? We must take a straight course back to the Enterprise and normal to her course once the sensors are locked."

"Give me the word."

Eight times T'Pol brought the 'craft out and turned it over to Kirk for the run back, cutting half a quadrant with each run. Eight times the sensors relayed data to the Enterprise computer and simultaneously stored it in the recording unit aboard the 'craft. Scanning routine was another difference between the Federations. Or maybe T'Pol was naturally more thorough than Spock. . . .

Shuttlecraft reboarded, she gestured Kirk and 'Christine' to the door while she retrieved the tape decks from the recorder. Kirk lingered outside until she stepped out.

"What have we got?"

"We shall know more after I compare these recordings with the telemetered data."

"What do we know now?"

"The current body of evidence strongly indicates that the Enterprise occupies, or contains, or lies within, the proximal focus of the corridor."

"You mean the door on this side is aboard the ship."

"I believe that is what I said."

Kirk grinned and shut up.





"Right away, Doctor." 'Christine' switched off the intercom and turned to the conference at the computer terminal. "Captain, Dr. McCoy wants you in sick bay."

"Can it wait?"

"I shall inform you as soon as there are any results," T'Pok assured him.

He looked from the Vulcan to the Earthwoman. "I'm hen-pecked. All right, Nurse, I'll go quietly."

"Thank you, Nurse. That will be all." 'McCoy' waved Kirk to a diagnostic couch and picked up a scanner.

"What's going on?" Kirk asked as soon as they were alone.

"Maintaining the cover. T'Pok's orders. But since you're stuck here for the next hour or so, you might want to talk."

What about? Anything. Though 'McCoy' was curious about Spock. . . Other Vulcans aboard? Just Spock, hm? Odd, over here they always ship out in pairs, like T'Pok and Suré. Enough to make you wonder if there are any unmarried Vulcans. . .

Lieutenant Suré was navigator, Kirk remembered. A dark, sombre youth, catlike in his talent for total repose as well as his quick grace in motion. Nothing to show his relationship to T'Pok, but of course there wouldn't be while they were on watch. Physiological age twenty or so, which put his chronological age somewhere within shouting distance of forty. At this end of a lifetime, though, it was physio-age that mattered more than count of years. Or did that. . .

"All right, you choose a topic."

Kirk dragged his thoughts back from a question he had no business asking. "How well am I keeping cover?"

"Pretty well." 'McCoy' frowned, as though he'd just had a nasty thought. "A little too close to T'Pok, maybe."

"?"

A certain crewwoman, with unstated but clear affection for her captain, was beginning to show manifest dislike for the commander. Kirk was certain there was more to it than that, but decided not to challenge 'McCoy' just yet.

"The sooner I get home, then, the better we'll all be pleased."

"Except T'Pok."

Kirk just stared. 'McCoy' went on, "You must realize by now that T'Pok feels more for you than she'd care to admit."

"Will that opinion dissuade you from entrusting your charge to me for the next watch, Doctor?"

Both men jumped. Kirk waited for 'McCoy' to say something, then decided he wouldn't any time soon. "What is it, T'Pok?"

"I have processed the data. It is promising."

'McCoy' found his voice. "You can send him home?"

"It is entirely possible."

"Possible!" 'McCoy' snorted. "Then it's also possible that you can't. You're going to risk two men's lives on a possibility."

"We must restore S'James to his shipmates. And we must have our captain back." Federation or Empire, woman or man, Spock's loyalty was constant throughout all the universes.

"But will we get him? Or will we get a corpse, or a zombie?"

"If we do not make the attempt, we shall definitely not get him back."

"You need my go-ahead before you can try it, and you won't get it until you have something better to show than a possibility." 'McCoy' sounded pleased with himself -- or maybe amused at the way T'Pok's cover story had come home to roost. A rescue wouldn't have needed the Chief Medical Officer's okay.

"We cannot expect the corridor to stay open indefinitely. We must make the transfer as soon as probability is in our favor."

"And I can't allow you to be the sole judge of the odds. You are too emotionally involved."



Kirk decided he had missed something. Of course T'Pok was as emotionally involved as a Vulcan could be; it was her captain that was missing. Now she quirked an eyebrow and turned to him with an air of polite apology.

"I must ask your pardon, S'James. We ought not carry on a private quarrel in public."

Looking from one to the other, Kirk began to be afraid for the first time since his transfer. "I seem to be involved, on my analogue's account as well as my own. He's in exile too. He must be as willing to risk the corridor as I am. And he must trust T'Pok, or she wouldn't be his First Officer."

Did T'Pok sigh softly? Though she fixed her eyes on the star-shaped scar on 'McCoy's' temple, Kirk had a feeling it was he and not 'McCoy' who had put her on the spot.

"It is the duty of the Chief Medical Officer to be suspicious," she began. Her voice was painfully objective. "Especially he must be suspicious of the second-in-command. Star Fleet is a competitive environment; ambition is natural, and can be fatal."

"My captain is, as you deduce, satisfied with my performance as First Officer. He does not consider me capable of command. He has never made such a statement explicitly, but he is reluctant to leave me in command, either aboard ship or on planet. If he stays aboard, so do I; if he goes planetside, I go with him."

"Dr. McCoy is convinced that I resent this. He has said as much before now. He is afraid that repressed resentment will make me misjudge some vital factor, killing you and my captain both."

"Do you resent it, T'Pok?"

She turned to him, then, in something like surprise. "Resentment is irrational. The Captain's decision is not ill-advised; the men do not trust me."

She'd said that before, Kirk remembered. As willing to trust a Vulcan as a computer -- and as hesitant. "I trust you."

"You are a passenger," she reminded him. "It is Dr. McCoy's trust that I must have." Her eyes shifted back to 'McCoy'. "Shall we agree on a double safety margin, Doctor? I do not think that will lose us our chance entirely." 'McCoy' was silent. "We can log both our positions. In fact, we are obliged to log the entire debate."

'McCoy' shook his head. "No need to worry Jim."

Eager to put the last few minutes behind them all, Kirk turned at once to the problem of the corridor. "What have you got, T'Pol?"

A great deal, it turned out. The corridor was still open, and the near door was indeed within the Enterprise. But 'open' was a relative term; there was a threshold.

"We are receiving noise from your universe, S'James, at a constant level. The corridor is not only established and open, it is stable. However, forcing a coherent signal through the corridor, with a reasonable probability of resolution, will require thirty-five to forty percent of our power. We shall of course approximate the conditions of the first transfer as closely as possible. Still, there will be a significant uncertainty factor."

Kirk remembered something about the corridor of Lazarus. "Why a threshold? The other corridor -- well, the two analogues kept oscillating back and forth."

"I do not believe the two are alike. I would not describe this one as 'a rip in the fabric of space', as you say my analogue described the other."

"Have you any idea how this corridor was formed?"

"It would appear to be a phenomenon of indeterminate probability, in the Kord'kjjekian sense. That is, the congruency has a probable existence; its intensity is random."

"Try English."

"It cannot be properly expressed without mathematics."

"Well, is the corridor likely to close on us?"

"Not while both ships remain in the vicinity. The presence of a starship seems to be a highly significant factor. It is entirely possible that we shall eventually be able to open corridors, at will, though at the moment the power requirements are prohibitive. . ."

"Just get us home, Spock. We can work out the rest later."

Personal Log, star date 8376.7: delayed entry

Now that the crew has seen me up and around, T'Pol and 'McCoy' have agreed that the 'quarantine' should be reduced.

The new story is that the captain is no longer convalescent, but neither is he strong enough to stand normal watches. He is to be seen abroad, but not often, and sick bay has him on a leash. 'McCoy' has publicly threatened to post those two interns at 'my' door if he doesn't like the hours I'm keeping.

The analogue of the Spock/McCoy feud in this universe is beginning to look ugly. I want to do something about it, at least talk it over with T'Pol and this McCoy, but I have absolutely no business intruding on the matter. . . except that I have become very fond of them both.

T'Pol is now trying to find a way to surmount the threshold of the corridor. I am this much closer to getting home, but it does not please me as it should, if I must leave the feud simmering behind me. I can only hope that, having lived with Spock and our McCoy, my analogue will be prepared to deal with the feud here.

McCoy turned, carefully casual, as the door closed behind Scott. "What is it about him that bothers you, Captain?"

"Scotty was killed in a nova reaction a year and a half ago."

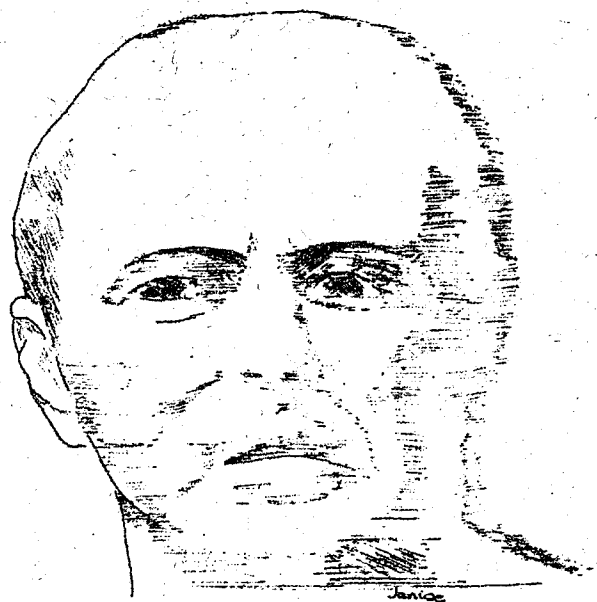
"And ours is like him."

'Kirk' nodded.  
"It hurts."

"I guess the whole thing is harder to take than our first transfer. The Empire universe was so viciously different. . . Things kept hitting us when we weren't looking, but when we did look we could see them. If that makes any sense."

"I think so." 'Kirk' paced the length of the briefing room. "I can think of worse places of exile than your universe, Doctor. It has only one fault; it is exile."

"If there's any way

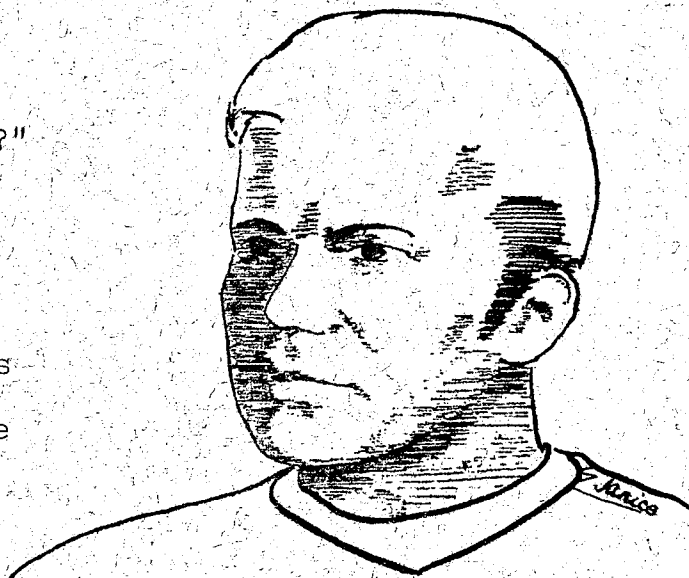


of getting you home,  
Spock and Scotty will  
find it."

"And if there isn't?"  
'Kirk' said softly, al-  
most to himself.

"Then they'll make  
one."

"You have tremendous  
faith in them." 'Kirk'  
stared at McCoy, his gaze  
centered on the other's  
right temple. McCoy was  
certain by then that his  
analogue had some mark  
or scar there.



He raised a hand to  
touch his own unblemished skin.  
"What was it?"

"Thyrosian smallpox. About three years before he came  
to us, he helped to relieve an epidemic. Minor, fortunately.  
It looks like a. . . a 'gunner's tattoo'.

"Whenever T'Pok gets mad at him, she looks at it. I  
think it's to remind herself that he argues from conviction,  
too. Anyway, it helps her keep her temper."

"She needs help?" That was surprising.

"They. . . don't get along. I've always assumed they  
couldn't help it. But you two --"

"--fight like a pair of Rigelian sand-spiders in nesting  
season. You just haven't seen us." He hunted for the right  
words. "Whenever there's room for difference of opinion, we  
. . . well, we differ."

"Sounds like what Dr. Rei told me." 'Kirk' managed a  
close imitation of the major Andorian accent. "The net pro-  
duct of their behavioral vectors is for the most part an op-  
timum path. It is when parity is not conserved, that the di-  
chotomy is extensionally reinforced." He looked up (he'd  
adopted the Andorian lecture stance as well) and continued  
normally. "There was more of the same; all I could make out  
was that the feud served some purpose, but we could've found  
a better way to do it."

There wasn't an awful lot to say to that. McCoy changed the subject. "Kind of frustrating that no one can ever meet his own analogue. At that, we're probably better off than Spock. I shouldn't think he'll be able to cross over at all."

"T'Pok never insisted on climbing every mountain. It's enough that they're there." 'Kirk' sobered. "Even if we two are exiled forever, each Federation knows the other exists. . . somewhere."

"You'll get home. Spock's never failed the Captain yet."

Ship's Log, star date 8376.8  
First Officer Spock recording:

The proximal focus of the corridor is indeed within the Enterprise. It will require the combined effort of both ships to overcome the threshold effect. Without communication, I must deduce the most probable position and activity of the analogue Enterprise. The greatest danger lies in the divergence between myself and my analogue. If our minds are too dissimilar, the captain and his analogue are doomed to life-long exile.

Kirk wondered what Surè was playing. It bore about the same relation to a lytherette as a guitar to a samisen, or a pianoforte to a Vegan senjal. Either it was by far the more versatile instrument, or Surè was the best musician he'd ever heard. Even the chess players were giving less than their full attention to the game. Music hath charms, Kirk thought, and took the opportunity to study his analogue's shipmates.

One of the countermelodies slowly gained ascendancy, the others subsiding into a sort of complex accompaniment. Kirk paid less and less attention to the off-duty crew as the music took hold of him and them. Somewhere along the way, the rippling polyphony had become a heavily-accented counterpoint to the main theme; he couldn't say just where. Like everyone in the room, he was literally fascinated.

Surè seemed fascinated himself. He was totally unaware of his audience. . . .

Silence came as a shock. The room filled with the barely audible sighs of a room full of people trying to breathe without sound. Surè was a pool of stillness in their midst. 'Sulu' went up to him, concern plain on his face.

Surè laid aside the instrument and rose to meet him. He seemed dazed, uncertain. Something was wrong. He took up combat stance.

'Sulu' froze. "Suré. Hey, Suré, it's me. What's wrong?"

Suré didn't speak. He seemed to be hyperventilating. His eyes were still clouded, his dazed expression unchanged. Something was not as it should be.

"Suré."

He stepped forward, still in combat crouch. 'Sulu' at last took up bare-hands stance himself, still trying to talk sense into his watchmate. Suré advanced another step, hesitated, advanced again.

Except for 'Sulu's' voice, Suré's boots scraping the deck were the only sound in the room. Kirk glanced around the audience. Certain they could help 'Sulu' best by keeping still, they kept still -- and, from their expressions, prayed. He grabbed for the nearest man. "Get T'Pok," he whispered urgently. "Tell her to get up here fast." He thought back to the kal-if-fee he'd seen on Vulcan, trying desperately to remember. . . .

Suré came within striking distance of 'Sulu' and hesitated again, while 'Sulu' tried desperately to get through to him. Somehow he kept his voice low and even. The hesitation became a wait. 'Sulu' seemed to be winning.

He dared to relax from combat-ready. Still talking, soothing the Vulcan by voice as though he were a nervous feral animal, 'Sulu' slowly stretched out a hand. Everyone stopped breathing as Suré gathered himself to spring.

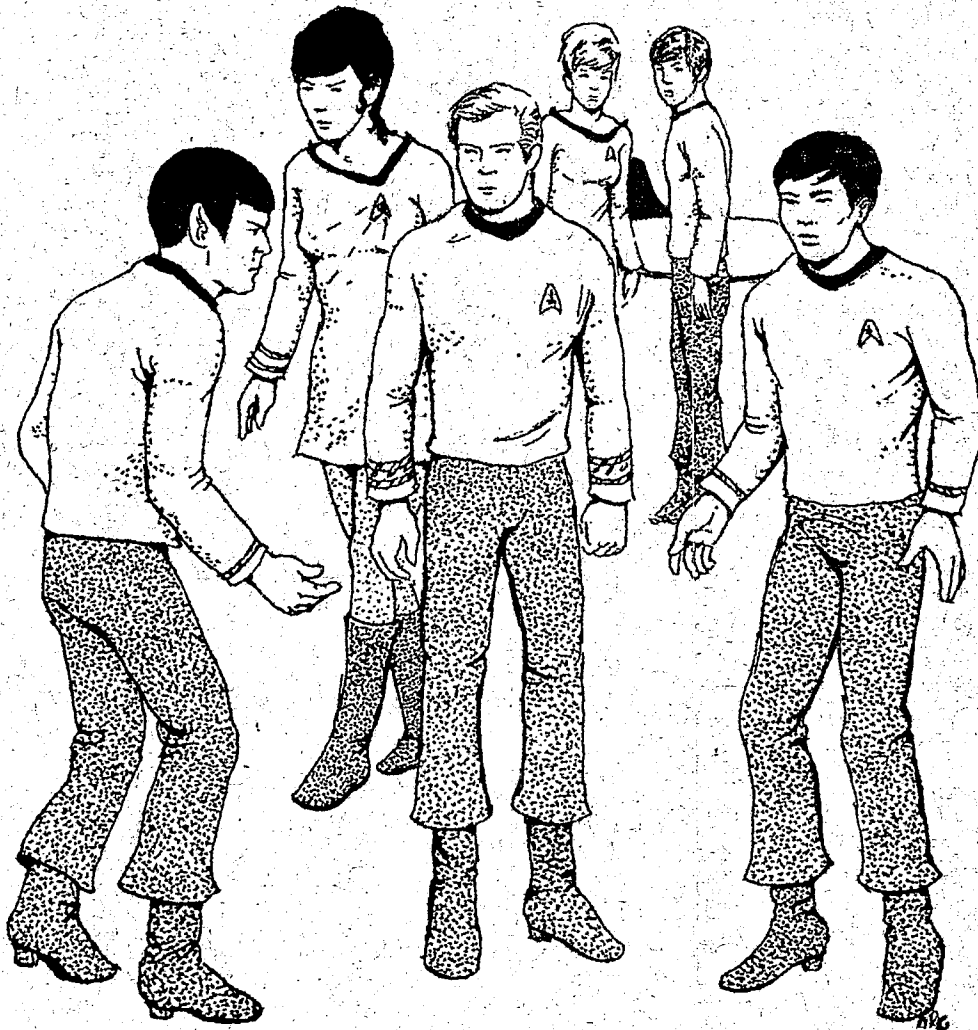
"Kroy-ka!"

Even as he froze, still poised for attack, Suré's uneasiness vanished. All was well. Things were going properly at last.

Trying to move as he remembered T'Pau's attendants had, Kirk stepped between the two and waved 'Sulu' back. Suré relaxed, but remained in Jundan Shuto, the bare-hands 'en garde', his eyes never leaving 'Sulu'. Kirk felt like a fencing-master, and he thanked Whoever arranged it that 'Sulu' stayed put. (What else did I expect? This Sulu is as close to Suré as mine is to Chekov. Maybe closer.)

He made himself relax, keeping his eyes on Suré but not letting his own uneasiness show. 'Fencing-master' was probably the best way to play it. Waiting for the squires to get here with the lirpas. We've got all day, nobody's going anywhere until we get through here.





T'Pok strode into his vision, Kirk couldn't quite hide his relief, but Suré didn't notice. He was waiting for the "Set on!" Without a break in stride, T'Pok came up behind her husband, scarcely seemed to touch him, caught him as he collapsed. Her face was a stony mask.

As silently as she had come, she turned to go, with Suré in her arms.

"T'Pok." She turned again to look at him. "I'll take care of the watch lists."

"Thank you, sir." And they were gone.

"Sir. . ." 'Sulu' was pale and his hands trembled, but his voice was steady. "Sir, what's wrong with him?"

Kirk took a deep breath. Cover stories again, and he didn't even know the man he had to convince. (No, wait a minute. He's basically Sulu, and he's a friend of Suré's.) "Nothing's actually wrong with him, except that he shouldn't have been left alone."

"Nothing --?"

"Chronologically, he's as old as T'Pok, but physiologically he's only just past adolescence. It's a rough time for Vulcans when they're surrounded by nontelepaths. If anybody knows why, they've never said." He remembered he had a roomful of people to convince, not just the sympathetic and cosmopolitan 'Sulu'. "Pity it had to break just when we're up to our ears in this. With no other telepaths aboard, T'Pok will have to stay with him. You look pretty shook yourself, Mr. Sulu." In fact, 'Sulu' was almost back to normal. "Better report to sick bay."

"I'm all right, sir. If T'Pok has things in hand. . . ." He broke off and spread his own hands in eloquent faith. Evidently T'Pok was more trusted than she realised; certainly more than she had led Kirk to imagine.

"All right, then." Kirk headed for 'his' quarters. At home he could have revised the watch list from memory, but he knew only his analogue's watch here, not all of them by name. He'd have to use the computer, and put it under the security seal T'Pok had set up.

Then he had to deal with 'McCoy'.

"What do you mean, 'No'?"

"I mean 'no'. Leave them alone. God knows we've work enough of our own to do. Cover stories again."

"Cover stories be damned!" By good luck 'McCoy' remembered to keep his voice down.

"T'Pok is in charge, Bones. She's temporarily incommunicado, but she's in command."

"You aren't in command," 'McCoy' pointed out, "and I'm in charge of the health of this crew." He had a leash on his temper, but the star-shaped 'gunner's tattoo' stood out against the pallor of his face. "I am the Chief Medical Officer. The Captain is either absent or demented, and the First Officer has locked herself up with a brawler who only just missed starting a first-class riot!"

"Wrong, Bones. What happened is so basic and normal to

Vulcans that they have devised or evolved a means of looking after it." He assumed that was what the computer meant by 'the precedents'. There was no further information on them. "Your universe is ahead of ours in that; it's covered by Federation laws."

" 'Criminal evangelism'," 'McCoy' snorted. Kirk guessed he and T'Pok must have clashed on that particular statute before. "Hardly covers the First Officer deserting her post --"

"Her post is with Suré for as long as he needs her. Our duty at the moment is to carry out her orders and look after the ship, not to barge in on a badly confused telepath and the one person aboard who can keep him sane long enough to recover."

'McCoy' calmed down. At least, he was no longer white-lipped with fury. "That might make sense, James, if T'Pok were fit to be put in charge of anyone's sanity."

"T'Pok is the best First Officer in the Fleet -- or was, until this came up. She has never been capable of command! She runs this ship, and no one knows it better than the Captain. But she hasn't got what it takes to lead men."

"The Captain has endangered himself more than once, in defiance of regulations and common sense, to keep her with him. Now, the Captain is a persuasive talker, as you well know, but T'Pok isn't blind. You heard her. She knows she's being kept on a leash."

"She has a chance now, the chance she can't help but feel the Captain has denied her."

"You're judging her as if she were an Earthman."

"She requested transfer not too long ago. The Captain talked her out of it."

"What!?"

"I quote: 'I am not fitted for the duties which you have seen fit to assign me. I am a field worker as much as a theoretician'. End quote. You still want to trust her with Suré?"

"There's no one else to trust him to," Kirk said absently. His mind was elsewhere. Suré' needed his wife and no one else. Period. Nor was it the local version of the feud that momentarily preoccupied him. "Bones. . . Would -- Have you told your captain that you consider T'Pok. . . ambitious?"

"So far, it hasn't been necessary. Why?"

"I wondered. . . ." He shook off the ghostly thought. "Bones, if T'Pok were scheming for command, would she throw up all her plots to save Suré?"

"I never said she was consciously plotting. She's loyal and devoted to duty; I'd be the last to question that. But she's half human. She has a human desire for command, and that desire is frustrated. She tried to run away from the situation, and the Captain wouldn't let her. Now she has a chance to show she can command, and Suré won't let her. Do you still want to leave her with Suré?"

"She won't hurt him. Anyway, there's no one else; she's the only other telepath aboard. He's her problem, or she's his. The ship is ours."

"Ours?"

"I can look after her. The security lock T'Pok set up is so tight Star Fleet Command couldn't get past it."

"As a captain in your own Fleet, what is your view on usurpation of command?"

"My analogue is the master of this ship. I'll do whatever I have to, to bring him back to her."

"I'm afraid I don't have T'Pok's faith in you, James."

Kirk thought fast. "I'm not the computerman T'Pok is, but it's no great problem to restrict the security lock. It's under her exclusive voice command. You can't get to it, and neither can I." He hoped he could get at the computer before 'McCoy' checked out the story. "The computer knows a voice duplicator from the real thing. Until T'Pok gets back, and we can all talk it over together. . . Yes, I'm usurping command."

"You really think you can get away with it!"

"Bones, Spock once hijacked the Enterprise out from under the collective nose of Star Fleet Command. That was the first time I ever doubted him, and the last."

The intercom beeped for attention.

"Kirk here."

"S'James. . . ."

"T'Pok! What --?" Kirk bit his tongue. He knew damned

well why she sounded so weary, and it was none of his affair.  
"What is it, T'Pok?"

"I had the beginnings of an answer when you called me. The computer is working on it. It will require both ships to reopen the corridor, and the power demand prohibits a continuous effort. You and my analogue must deduce a means of co-operation without communication. The data is all in the computer banks, and in your memory."

"I'll get on it." He hesitated, knowing he should sign off. T'Pok read his mind.

"All well, S'James. We shall rejoin --" A snarl out through her voice, and the intercom went dead.

Ship's Log, star date 8379.9  
Captain James T. Kirk recording

We have reconstructed the circumstances of my previous attack five times, without re-encountering the anomalies. Nor have I suffered recurrence of the original symptoms. Since we have taken every reasonable factor into account, we must start in on the unreasonable ones.

"Position, Mr. Sulu?" Kirk heard the weariness in his own voice, and hoped it escaped the others.

"Match, Captain. Ready for the run."

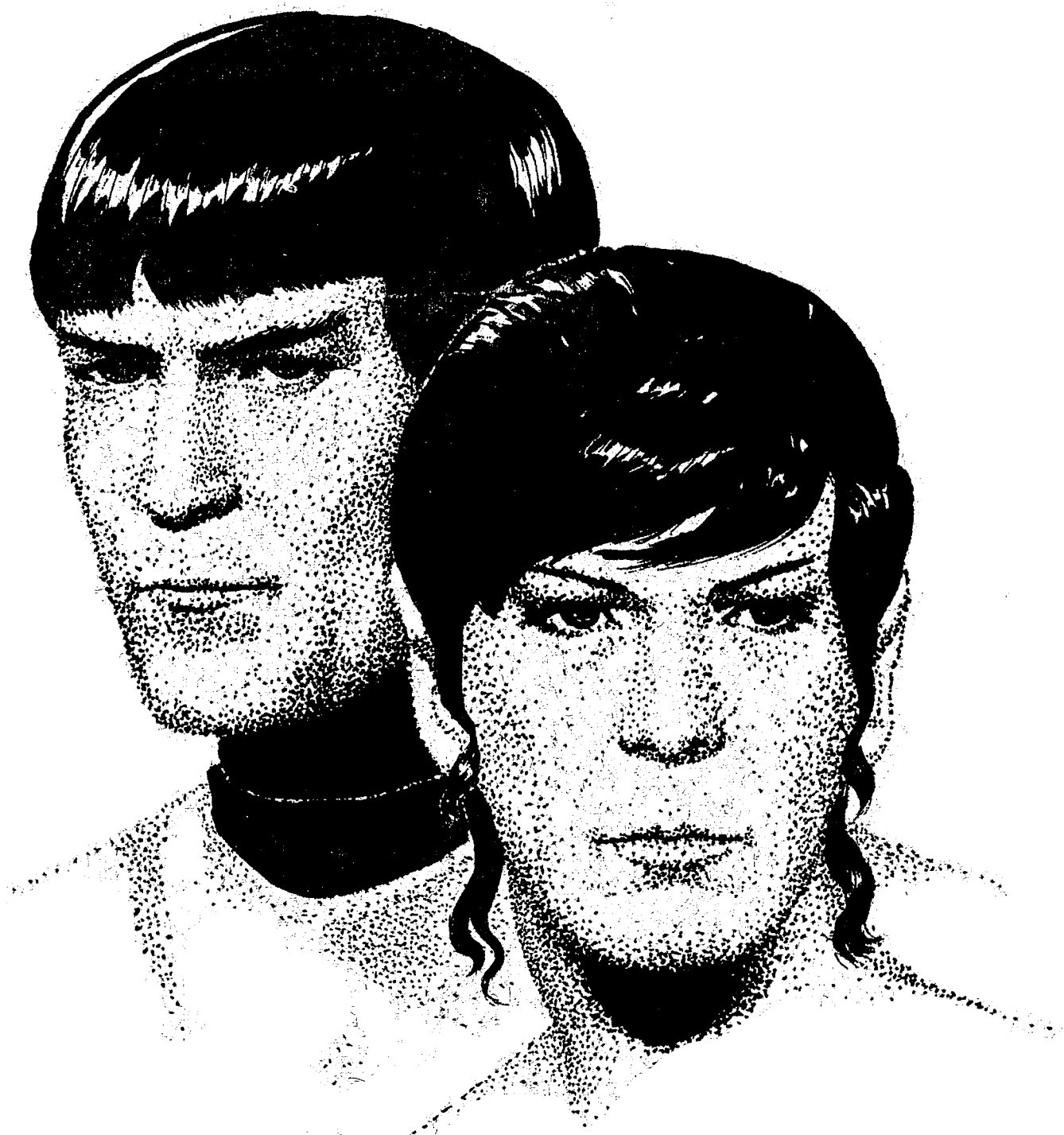
Kirk glanced at T'Pok's post and away before Shenoda caught his gaze. The Polynesian was a competent Science Officer, but no help here. Only Kirk himself had any chance of figuring how Spock would time his efforts on the other side, and Kirk had no idea what factors Spock would take into account in making his decisions. It would be geared, not for Kirk, but for T'Pok.

"Reporting for duty, sir."

Neither T'Pok nor Suré had eaten nor, apparently, slept since they disappeared into their quarters. They were gaunt and hollow-eyed, and they walked as though they owned the galaxy. Kirk gave them a wide grin; to hell with diplomacy.

"We're having difficulty with the timing, T'Pok."

She waved Suré to his post as she crossed to hers. After a glance at the display on the nearest screen, she turned



May Rolling Obedience  
1974

back to Kirk. "Captain, I call your attention to the short-term Cepheid variable at 133 mark 2."

"I see it." He glanced across at her and nodded. He remembered it from his own universe; Spock had remarked that its period was abnormally short.

T'Pok returned to the sensors. "Now tracing the theta cycle of the variable. Mr. Kyle, Mr. Sulu, stand by to coordinate. We shall commence our next run at the theta trough."

"Standing by," they chorused, almost in perfect unison.

"Lay in the course. Match previous sensor data."

"Laid in. Match clear."

"Bring us around, Mr. Sulu."

"Aye, sir." The star field swung about. "Patched in. Twenty-eight point five minutes."

Kirk glanced around the bridge. "Relax, gentlemen. We have a bit of a wait ahead." He debated with himself a moment, then gave in and went to T'Pok. "I know it's none of my business," he said quietly. "But -- how is he?"

"Recovered."

"Glad to hear it." He turned away, then looked back. "Congratulations."

"Thank you, sir."

"I believe you had best sit down, Captain. Remember your previous experience."

"I remember." He nodded to 'Kyle' and returned to the command chair. 'McCoy' hovered with his medical scanner, the 'gunner's tattoo' standing out like a black nova.

"Coming up on it now." T'Pok turned and raised an interrogative eyebrow. "Captain?"

Kirk shook his head. "Nothing yet," he started to say, when his head came off and floated away in a grey haze, bobbing about in some sort of current that roared and whispered around it. Voices from the bridge penetrated faintly.

"Stay on it, gentlemen. Navigator, what's the match?"

"Still clear."

Something was trying to squeeze his head through a pipette. If he didn't stop whoever it was, his eyes were going to pop out of their sockets. Only, how does a head go about stopping a pipette-squeezer? No hands. Whups! no eyes. this breaks me up

"Power below curve."

"Mr. Kyle, bring us up."

"Aye -- "

"It'll kill the captain!"

"Bring us to curve, Mr. Kyle!"

He bobbed free of the pipette and floated on. A crackle of static built up, jamming out voices and current-whisper alike.

"He's coming around."

"Excellent."

The second voice made him sit up and take notice. "Spock!"

"I'd say that's indicative, Mr. Spock. Wouldn't you?"

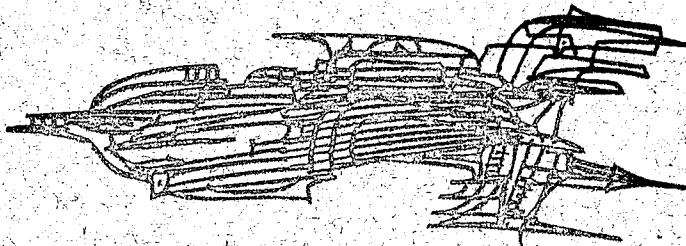
Kirk looked at McCoy - no scar - and back to Spock. "I see you've . . . gotten acquainted with my analogue."

"We have. And we have arranged a tentative rendezvous after each Enterprise has reported to her Command and the Federations have deliberated."

"Good. I think we're going to like our new neighbors."

McCoy grinned wickedly. "I want to hear about T'Pok."

"Take that look off your face, Doctor. She's a respectable married woman."





# SOLUTIONS

A. "The beer is never clear around here, dear."

B. "When I make a word do a lot of work like that," said  
Humpty Dumpty, "I always pay it extra."

Richard (circle) Taylor  
Elizabeth (fish)

Edward (sword) Smith  
Anne (lion)

John (star) Baker  
Matilda (hammer)

Henry (cross) Miller  
Eleanor (rose)

William (feather) Fletcher  
Mary (tree)

The murdered could not be Richard. Lord Blythingstoke could neither see him (as no one could take off his own hood) nor did anyone hear any voices coming from the study. Hence the Lord could not have seen nor heard his murderer. Therefore, the clue could only refer to the symbol on the murderer's hood - specifically, the lion on Anne's hood. Hence, the murderer must be Anne.

